



LIBRARY OF HEAVEN'S PATH

BOOK 05

Heng Sao Tian Ya

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Library of Heaven's Path

(Tian Dao Du Shu Guan)

(天道图书馆)

by

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Synopsis

Zhang Xuan traverses into a foreign world and becomes an honorable teacher. A mysterious library appears in his mind. As long as it is something he has seen, regardless of whether it is a human or an object, a book on its weakness would be automatically compiled. Thus, he became formidable.

“Emperor Haotian, why don’t you like to wear underwear? To think that you’re still an emperor, can you pay more attention to your image?”

“Fairy Linglong, if you continue to suffer from insomnia, you can always look for me. I have a way with lullabies!”

“You as well, Qiankun Demon Lord, can you cut down on the garlic? Do you want to stink me to death?”

...

This is an incredible story about the heritage between teacher and students, cultivating and guiding the world’s strongest experts.

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Chapter 401: Paying Respects to Yang shi

Someone had rejected the acknowledgement of the ancestors after passing the master teacher examination?

You must be pulling my leg!

Is there... such an insane figure in the world?

"Winning the acknowledgement of a senior is a huge blessing! Reject? Who in the world is it?"

After a moment of daze, Pavilion Master Jiang nearly went insane.

Mo Hongyi's feat of winning the acknowledgement from a single ancestor had already broken the record of Tianwu Kingdom for the past three hundred years, and it had incited a wave of excitement within the Master Teacher Pavilion.

Pavilion Master Jiang also felt honored; he would be able to keep his head up in the other Master Teacher Pavilions of the other kingdoms in the future.

Yet, for someone to reject the ancestors' acknowledgement...

It was fortunate that Mo Hongyi wasn't around. If he were to learn of this news, wouldn't he spew blood and faint on the spot?

"This... That's impossible!"

Su shi and Ling shi were perplexed as well.

The acknowledgement from the ancestors would grant one with a unique aura that would raise one's Soul Depth swiftly. There wasn't a single master teacher who could reject such a benefit. This...

"Wait... The headquarter said that if there's a Teacher Acknowledgement Hall of any branch has collapsed, report swiftly... The Teacher Acknowledgement Hall here has collapsed!"

Ling shi was the first to realize this matter, and his face tensed.

They didn't know what 'Rejection of the Ancestors, Sorrowful Chimes of the Bell' meant, but since the headquarter had asked about the collapsing of the Teacher Acknowledgement Hall, it wasn't difficult for them to deduce the matter.

The headquarter wasn't so idle as to do unnecessary things. Since they asked about the collapsing of the Teacher Acknowledgement Hall, it must have something to do with these nine words.

"You mean that... the person who rejected the acknowledgement of the ancestors might be in this guild?" Su shi eyes widened, and his voice sounded a little hoarse.

In the past few days, only Mo shi and Zhang shi had passed the examinations. The former had managed to win the acknowledgement of one elder while the latter caused Kong shi's statue to fall over and the entire Teacher Acknowledgement Hall to collapse... Even though the entire incident was bewildering, they didn't see him reject the ancestors.

"Let's ask about it!"

Confused, Ling shi dabbed the brush in ink and wrote, "What does 'Rejection of the Ancestors, Sorrowful Chimes of the Bell' mean?"

Weng!

The words disappeared, and not too long later, a radiance flashed, and another line of words appeared on the Communication Wall.

"Not absorbing the unique aura granted by the ancestors, rejecting their goodwill..."

Upon realization, the group shuddered once more.

To reject the ancestors and induce their sorrowful cries...

How incredible must a figure be to do such stuff?

They stared at one another in shock, bewildered over who had that kind of guts that do such a thing. At that moment, the wall before them shone once more, and a few more line of words appeared.

"Two days ago, [at shu hour](#), he rejected the acknowledgement of all of the ancestors and Kong shi, resulting in the shaking of the statue... Under such circumstances, it's highly possible for the Teacher Acknowledgement Hall to collapse! If there's the shaking of the Kong shi's statue or the collapsing of the Teacher Acknowledgement Hall in any branch, report swiftly!"

"Two days ago, at shu hour... That seems to be around the timing when Zhang shi is seeking acknowledgement from the elders..." Su shi trembled.

"Indeed! The trembling of the statue and the collapsing of the Teacher Acknowledgement Hall... Could the one who incited the sorrowful cries of the ancestors be... Zhang shi?"

Ling shi's body swayed vigorously.

He was just thinking which incredible figure it could be, when it turned out to be the fellow just around them!

Are you for real?

"It should be true..."

Upon thinking of something, Pavilion Master Jiang smiled bitterly.

"Oh?"

Hearing Pavilion Master Jiang affirm the matter, the two 4-star master teacher turned to look at him.

"A similar situation happened two days ago. The ancestral tablets of the Teacher Acknowledgement Hall trembled... and Kong shi's statue moved as well..."

After pondering for a moment, Pavilion Master Jiang explained the situation that happened two days ago.

"The Trembling of Myriad Tokens... Celestial Master Teacher? Trembling of Kong shi, this is... Kong shi Admits a Disciple, the Student of the Sage?"

"But more importantly... he was rejected?"

Su shi and Ling shi was on the verge of going insane.

It was one thing to reject the acknowledgement of the ancestors, but to reject an offer to become Kong shi's student...

Since it happened here, it was clear that it was the doing of a genius in the guild.

In that instant, a figure appeared in their minds...

Zhang Xuan!

"It must be him!"

With quivering lips, Su shi jumped up in agitation.

Celestial Master Teacher, an existence whom even Kong shi wanted as his student... Initially, they thought that all they would find was a slightly more capable genius. Never in the dreams did they expect that they would find such a formidable figure whose feats exceeded their imagination.

"Hurry up and inform the headquarter! Have the pavilion master welcome him personally..."

Ling shi excitedly picked up the brush and prepared to write on it.

Putting aside Kong shi's intent to take him in, just the fact that Zhang Xuan was a Celestial Master Teacher already made him an existence worthy of the pavilion master to invite over personally.

Of the entire continent, only Kong shi had managed to become a Celestial Master Teacher. Other than him, no one had ever achieved that feat.

"Ling shi, wait a moment..." Jiang Shu hurriedly stopped him.

"What's wrong?"

Frowning, Ling shi turned to look at Jiang Shu.

"The matter of Celestial Master Teacher is too big... I'm afraid that it might bring calamity to Zhang shi if the matter were to leak out. Besides... Kong shi being rejected isn't a glorious affair. I've already ordered the others to keep quiet on the matter, but if the news were to leak in the headquarters..." Pavilion Master Jiang explained.

Even though the Master Teacher Pavilion possessed overwhelming authority in the continent, they still had many hidden enemies.

Besides, given that the Master Teacher Tournament was going to be held, if other powers were to learn of the existence of such a formidable genius, they might be tempted to poach him or even cut him off before he grows.

It was better to proceed prudently.

"Pavilion Master Jiang is right. We should report this matter straight on to the pavilion master alone. The fewer people who knows of it, the better it is!" Su shi nodded grimly in agreement to Jiang Shu's words.

"Un!" At this moment, Ling shi also recovered from his agitation and nodded. He then wrote on the wall, "None!"

Since they decided not to speak of this matter on the Communication Wall, they could only reply like this for now.

"Celestial Master Teacher, and on top of that, a person who nearly became Kong shi's student... It's one thing if we didn't know, but once we know, we should pay him a visit regardless of the cost!"

After replying to the headquarters, Su shi and Ling shi could no longer suppress their agitation in their hearts

They might be 4-star master teachers, but as compared to a Celestial Master Teacher, they were way too lacking.

They had only earned the acknowledgement of the ancestors, but the other party earned the acknowledgement of the heavens...

The gap between them couldn't be summarized with just the single word 'large'.

As long as he survived, he would most probably reach the pinnacle of this world.

"We must pay a visit to Zhang shi eventually, but the first person

we should meet is... Yang shi!" Su shi replied grimly.

"To be capable of grooming a Celestial Master Teacher, and more importantly, have his own student reject even Kong shi, how fearsome must this Yang shi be? If we were to listen to even a word of his guidance, we might be able to take a huge step forward in our cultivation!"

At this time, Ling shi also came to the same conclusion, and he nodded in agreement.

One could have a lot of teachers in their life.

But there were some who have decided to only acknowledge one teacher in their entire life.

It was just like Kong shi's students. Even if they wanted to acknowledge others as their teacher, no one would dare to accept them!

For Yang shi, Zhang shi was willing to even reject Kong shi. How fearsome could this Yang Xuan be?

"Let's go!"

Without any hesitation, the two 4-star master teacher swiftly headed for Zhang Xuan's residence.

...

In the past few days, Mo Hongyi had been in a good mood.

Ever since that Zhang Xuan fellow's appearance, his records had been beaten one after another, and his title as the number one genius had been usurped.

Since he wasn't as capable as the other party, he could only work diligently in hopes of overtaking him in the future.

And his efforts paid off. Two days ago, he was acknowledged by the ancestors, and he managed to triumph over Zhang Xuan for once.

With this, he had broken the record of the Master Teacher Pavilion for the past three hundred years.

Wasn't that Zhang Xuan a genius? Wasn't he formidable?

But, so what? Zhang Xuan still ended up being acknowledged by none of the ancestors at all.

In the end, he was still the ultimate victor.

A slight smile curved onto Mo Hongyi's lips.

The refusal of the ancestors to acknowledge him meant that he had come to the limits of his potential, and his future achievements were limited!

He had heard of many geniuses who shone brightly when they were younger, only to end up just like anyone else in the future.

This Zhang Xuan was probably still the same as well.

So what if he was a genius? Potential was the key!

"I should look for Su shi and Ling shi, and see if they are willing to take me in as their student. If they really take me in, I would surely be able to surpass Zhang Xuan soon!"

Tidying up his clothes, a streak of excitement flashed across his eyes.

Ever since Pavilion Master Jiang introduced Su shi and Ling shi to him, the intention to take one of them as his teacher had sprouted in his mind.

If he succeeded, a whole new world would open before him.

"Mo shi, my apologies, but Su shi and Ling shi have already left this morning!"

Mo Hongyi looked around the Master Teacher Pavilion, but he

couldn't find the duo. In the end, after asking around about the matter, he met with Pavilion Master Jiang.

"Left? Where did they go to?" Mo Hongyi asked.

"Oh, they went to Zhang shi's residence!" Pavilion Master Jiang replied.

"Thank you..."

Upon learning of their whereabouts, Mo Hongyi nodded and left.

"I need to hurry..."

It was very possible that Zhang Xuan might have the same thoughts as him.

How could he give this good opportunity away to that fellow?

He had surpassed the other party in the acknowledgement of the ancestors, and this was a good omen. As long as he worked hard, he would surely be able to surpass the other party's records.

Zhang Xuan's residence wasn't too far away from the Master Teacher Pavilion. It didn't take too long for Mo Hongyi to arrive at his destination.

Turning around the streets, he suddenly caught sight of two figures and hurriedly stopped.

"That is... Su shi and Ling shi?"

The two master teachers were standing quietly in front of Zhang Xuan's residence with a respectful look.

Didn't they head here early in the morning? Why were they still standing at the doorstep?

More importantly... that respectful attitude... what in the world was that?

They were 4-star master teachers, the respected elders of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance's Master Teacher Pavilion. Even if the emperor of Xuanyuan Kingdom were to come, he would have to welcome them subserviently.

Yet, at this moment, they seemed no different from anxious students...

Mo Hongyi blinked his eyes in disbelief.

Jiya!

Just as he was still in the midst of his shock, the gates to the courtyard opened, and a plump man walked out. He spoke

casually, "The old master has just returned, and he has asked for you two to enter! I'll just say this in advance, the old master doesn't like a ruckus, so try to maintain silence after you enter!"

"Yes!"

"Don't worry, we'll definitely keep quiet!" Su shi and Ling shi hurriedly nodded.

"Alright, then let's go!"

Waving casually, the plump man led the way.

The two master teachers hurriedly followed behind.

"The heck..."

Mo Hongyi's eyes were about to fall to the floor.

What... in the world is going on?

To think that 4-star master teachers would still have to request for a meeting!

On top of that, to wait an entire morning for it?

And that butler's casual attitude, almost to the point of being

rude... Wasn't he afraid of being smacked to death?

Mo Hongyi's mouth twitched violently, and he felt as though the entire world had gone wrong.

shu hour is from 7PM to 9PM

Chapter 402: Unfathomable Yang shi (1)

Rubbing his glabella, Zhang Xuan finally woke up.

There was too much information contained within the Library of Heaven's Path, causing the time he was passed out to last much longer than before.

However, the rewards he got was massive as well.

Battle techniques, apothecary, beast tamer, painter, physician, master teacher, poison master...

The information of countless occupations had become his own. He no longer had to dive into the Library of Heaven's Path to look up this information; with a single thought, it would appear in his head.

To gather all of this knowledge, even if one possessed photographic memory, it would take at least dozens of year. On the other hand, Zhang Xuan only took an entire day...

If others were to know about it, they would definitely spurt blood.

What genius and what advanced master teacher... Before such efficiency, they meant nothing at all.

There was no basis of comparison at all.

"As expected of the Book of Heaven's Path. It truly doesn't let me down!" Zhang Xuan chuckled.

Even though he knew the might of the Book of Heaven's Path, the pages of which were formed by the earnest gratitude of a student, was formidable, he couldn't help but feel impressed every time he used it.

To casually raise his Soul Depth by 5.0 and assimilate the knowledge contained within the innumerable books in the Library of Heaven's Path for his own...

Regardless of which one it was, it was sufficient to send anyone into a frenzy.

"The Book of Heaven's Path probably has many more uses than this!"

Zhang Xuan had only managed to uncover these two effects by chance. The use of the Book of Heaven's Path was surely much more than that, and he had verified it back then.

It seemed like he had to accept more students in the future and win their gratitude so as to collect much more golden pages.

This way, he would be able to grow swiftly.

After waking up, he spent a long time reorganizing his knowledge before stretching lazily and walking out of the room.

Upon walking into the main hall, Sun Qiang walked up to him and reported, "Young master, someone has requested to meet with the old master, and they have already waited for an entire morning!"

"Requested to meet the old master? Who?"

Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

"They said that they were from the Master Teacher Pavilion. One of them is Su Fan while the other one is Ling Yuheng!" Sun Qing replied.

"Su Fan? Ling Yuheng?"

Zhang Xuan was perplexed. Who were they? There didn't seem to be these two figures among the master teachers of Tianwu Kingdom...

"Wait. They are... Su shi and Ling shi?"

An epiphany struck him, and he nearly fainted on the spot.

Back then, when Pavilion Master Jiang introduced the two

master teachers to him, out of respect, he didn't use their full names. As such, Zhang Xuan didn't relate Su Fan and Ling Yuheng to the two 4-star master teachers instantly. However, given that they came from the Master Teacher Pavilion and they were here to look for 'Old Master Yang Xuan', who else could it be other than those two fellows?

Didn't he say that he would tell them about it once 'Yang shi' returns? Why would they rush here all of the sudden, not to mention, early in the morning?

He hadn't even made preparations yet...

The two 4-star master teachers were existences that surpassed Zhizun realm experts... Yet, they had been waiting at his entrance for an entire morning?

"Where did you arrange them to rest at? The guest room or the conference room?"

Upon thinking about how he kept these two formidable figures waiting, Zhang Xuan's mouth twitched, and he couldn't help but ask.

"Guest room? Conference room? They didn't even bring anything when paying a visit to Yang shi, are they worthy of such treatment?"

Sun Qiang harrumphed in disdain. "I had those two disrespectful

fellows wait outside the residence! If not for the fact that they came from the Master Teacher Pavilion, I would have chased them away already! Who the hell do they think they are, to not even know the rules!"

Putong!

After hearing those words, Zhang Xuan's body swayed, and he nearly collapsed to the ground.

"Young master, what's wrong?" Sun Qiang hurried forward to support him.

"What's wrong?"

Zhang Xuan nearly burst into tears.

The hell!

Do you know how powerful the two of them are? What's wrong?

This useless fellow! How did he find himself such a darned butler...

The two of them were 4-star master teachers, and he kept them waiting outside for an entire morning...

He sure was courageous!

Zhang Xuan felt blood welling up at the back of his throat.

If he didn't discipline this butler of his soon, it was just a matter of time before he is done in by another party.

It was fortunate that those two master teachers had a good temper. Otherwise, if they were to lash out, even the entire Tianwu Kingdom wouldn't be sufficient to placate their wrath!

Just as he was about to berate the other party, he suddenly recalled that the other party's arrogant personality was a result of 'Yang shi's' teaching back then. Suddenly, he felt stifled within.

"Hurry up and invite them in. Make sure to treat them respectfully..."

Holding back his frustration, Zhang Xuan instructed. However, halfway through his words, he shook his head, "Forget it. Just treat them as any other guest, and bring them over here. I'll contact teacher now..."

The 'old master' whom the other party wanted to meet was supposed to be an equal existence to them. If he were to change his attitude now, it could bring even more trouble.

It wasn't his first time playing off as an expert, and he didn't mind doing it again.

Besides, he had no other choice anyway...

The butler had already gone so far. If the strength of this 'Yang shi' turned out to be inferior to them, wouldn't they immediately fly into a rage?

"Yes!"

Sun Qiang walked out.

Upon seeing him leave, Zhang Xuan took out a set of clothes from his storage ring and put it on. Then, operating his Heaven's Path Disguise Art, his muscles started moving, and his appearance changed.

It didn't take long for him to turn into 'Yang Xuan'. However, with his stronger cultivation and higher Soul Depth, he held a much more imposing disposition compared to back when he was still at Tianxuan Kingdom.

Ascertaining that there were no flaws in his disguise, Zhang Xuan walked over to the main seat, sipped on his tea, and waited patiently.

Not too long later, the duo walked in under Sun Qiang's lead.

As Zhang Xuan expected, they were Su shi and Ling shi.

"This is the old master, Yang shi!"

Upon seeing that the old master was in the main hall, Sun Qiang was dazed for a moment before hurriedly introducing with a proud look.

"Su Fan pays respect to Yang shi!"

"Ling Yuheng greets Yang shi!"

The duo clasped their fists respectfully.

Even though they could tell that Yang shi was man of great capabilities through Zhang Xuan, they still felt a little displeased at how the other party kept them waiting for an entire morning.

No matter what, they were 4-star master teachers. To be left waiting at the doorstep, it could only mean that the other party didn't think much of them.

Thus, they started observing this Yang Xuan as soon as they arrived, intent to see if he was as formidable as the others made him out to be.

But with a single look, they frowned.

The muscles and the bones of the man before them didn't align

perfectly with one another, and there were signs of them being moved. Clearly, he was in disguise.

They couldn't discern his original appearance, but through his clean and smooth skin, as well as his powerful vitality, he was likely to be young.

There were geniuses in this world, but no matter how talented a person was, he needed time to grow. In the end, age was still a limiting factor for one's abilities.

"This Yang shi seems young..."

Upon seeing through all this, Su shi sent a telepathic message to Ling shi.

"Indeed. However, I can't see through his cultivation!" Ling shi frowned.

They were both existences who surpassed Zhizun realm. As long as the other party's cultivation didn't surpass theirs, they should be able to discern the other party's cultivation easily, even if the other party tried to conceal it. However... despite their intent observation, they were unable to tell anything at all. This meant that the person before them could only be stronger than them.

"Un!" Su shi nodded.

He was unable to see through the other party's cultivation as

well.

There were only two possibilities if one was unable to see through another person's cultivation. Firstly, the other party was stronger than them. Secondly, the cultivation technique that the other party cultivated was at a much higher level than their own, resulting in his zhenqi being so pure that one was unable to make a clear assessment.

Regardless of which of the two possibilities it was, it could only mean to say that Yang shi wasn't an ordinary person.

"Done looking yet?"

They stared intently at Yang shi with a tenacious drive to dig out every single detail of his, only to see the other party casually lifting a teapot and slowly pouring himself a cup of tea. Without even glancing at them, his impassive voice sounded.

"We've heard of the numerous amazing feats of Yang shi, and your ability to nourish a student like Zhang shi has filled us with admiration and curiosity. Please pardon our breach of etiquette!"

Upon being exposed, the duo felt a little awkward. Smiling faintly, Su shi and Ling shi glanced at one another before taking a seat.

"It's not a problem!"

Putting down the teapot, Zhang Xuan lifted his head and glanced at them.

Only then did the duo clearly see his appearance. Yang shi was in his forties, and he had a dashing appearance.

Su shi and Ling shi immediately tried to match his looks to the descriptions of the master teachers they had heard of, but at this moment, they suddenly saw the other party's clear eyes.

Looking into those eyes, Su shi and Ling shi's breathing immediately hastened. Their eyes widened, and they nearly dropped the teacup in their hands onto the floor.

"This is..."

"Eye of Insight!"

Small strings of Insight Energy flowed within those wise and deep eyes, making the person before them an unfathomable existence.

With just a single look, a name immediately appeared in their minds...

Eye of Insight!

This was an ability that only 6-star master teachers could

comprehend. It was said that those who possessed this could peer into the essence of the world with a single look...

They thought that it was only a legend, but to think that it would be true!

And for it to appear on the person before them at that!

"Could it be that..."

The lips of the duo quivered.

Could this Yang shi be a 6-star master teacher, or even higher than that?

The very thought of it vanquished their displeasure from being disregarded by the other party.

Putting aside the knowledge and rallying ability of a 6-star master teacher, with his cultivation itself, he would be more than capable of destroying the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance!

Even if an expert of his caliber were to humiliate them, they wouldn't dare to utter a single word of complaint!

This was the strength and rank of a 6-star master teacher!

The disparity between each rank grew larger the higher up the ladder of a master teacher. Especially after 5-star, the difference between each rank was like heaven and earth.

A 2-star master teacher might be hard-pressed to defeat ten 1-star master teachers, but it was a walk in the park for a 6-star master teacher to subdue a hundred 5-star master teachers at once.

Hu!

The duo's hearts jolted. Fortunately, the Insight Energy flowing within Yang shi's eyes disappeared after a short moment, and he reverted back to his original state. Gazing at the duo impassively, Yang shi said, "Su shi and Ling shi, may I know the reason for your visit?"

"Ah..." Su shi was dumbstruck.

Initially, they thought that Yang shi would be around their caliber, and their highest estimate was 4-star pinnacle or 5-star. If so, they could still interact and trade some insights. Who could have thought that... the other party would display the Eye of Insight which only 6-star master teachers could comprehend?

They could still trade insights with those around the same level as them, but with this kind of expert... How in the world should they trade insights with him? It would be more like seeking guidance!

But given how they abruptly visited the other party, if they were to say that they were here to seek guidance, that would be a huge breach of etiquette!

"Actually, we asked a favor of Zhang shi. May I know if he has discussed the matter with Yang shi yet?" Ling shi reacted swiftly, and he hurriedly replied.

"That's right! We're here for this matter!" Su shi nodded vigorously.

"Is it about the matter of the Master Teacher Tournament?" Zhang Xuan frowned.

He was perplexed by why these two experts were so intent to find 'Yang shi', but to think that it would be for this matter.

Back then, when the other party told him to discuss this matter with his 'teacher', it seemed like they really meant what they said.

"Yes. Despite being under twenty, Zhang shi possesses outstanding talents. If he were to join, he'll surely be able to make a name for himself..." Su shi hurriedly explained. However, before he could finish his words, a cold harrumph echoed in the hall.

"Does my student need a tournament to prove himself?"

Yang shi gestured haughtily, "You must be joking!"

"This..."

Su shi and Ling shi shuddered, and their faces paled simultaneously.

Chapter 403: Unfathomable Yang shi (2)

This person before them could potentially be a master teacher beyond 6-star. At the same time, his student, Zhang Xuan, was a person who was capable of breaking the records of the guild simultaneously. If he truly wished to make a name for himself, there was no need for him to join any tournament whatsoever. In fact, just by saying that he was Yang shi's student, he was already able to incur the envy of countless geniuses in the world.

"Yang shi, I have misspoken! Pardon me," Su shi hurriedly apologized.

"Enough."

Zhang Xuan waved his hands casually. "If this is the reason why you all are here, you all can leave now. The decision is in Zhang Xuan's hands! I am only his teacher, I'm not his nanny. I don't interfere in all of his affairs."

"We were rash..."

Upon hearing the other party's intent to chase them out, Su shi and Ling shi hurriedly stood up, but they didn't leave immediately. Instead, a hesitant look appeared on their face, and Su shi gritted his teeth and asked, "Actually, I have met with some doubts in my cultivation, and I would like to ask for Yang shi's guidance."

This was a master teacher who was likely to exceed 6-star! He might not necessarily meet another one in his entire life. Since he

met with one, if he didn't ask any questions, he would surely regret it for the rest of his life.

"What doubts do you have?"

Zhang Xuan clenched his fists tightly, but he put on a nonchalant expression.

This was what he feared the most disguising as a higher ranked master teacher. As a master teacher, he had a duty to enlighten his juniors. While he could refuse the other party, it could potentially raise doubts on his character, or even worse, his identity.

Seeing that the other party didn't reject them outright, Su shi heaved a sigh of relief. A hint of delight flashed in his eyes, and he hurriedly replied, "The cultivation technique that I am cultivating now is Miniature Solar Art, and every time I drive it to the seventh circulation I feel as though my body is being torn apart, and I'm unable to continue on. This matter has been plaguing me for a while, and I've been unable to find a solution to it!"

"Miniature Solar Art?" Zhang Xuan's face darkened.

He had assimilated the knowledge of the books in Tianwu Royal City into his head, but this name didn't ring a bell at all. He had no idea what the sixth or seventh circulation the other party was talking about was at all

"Show me!"

Even though Zhang Xuan felt a little stifled within, he had experienced this kind of stuff numerous times, so he didn't panic at all. Instead, he slowly sipped on his tea before raising his gaze to ask. His movements were composed and refined.

"Yes!" Su shi nodded.

To offer the most accurate guidance, one had to see the situation for themselves first.

Su shi moved to the center of the room and sat down cross-legged. Then, his hands moved in a circular motion, and spiritual energy started to concentrate in the center.

Tzzzzzz!

The speed at which spiritual energy was being absorbed was so swift that a deafening sonic boom sounded.

"Incredible..."

Seeing the speed at which the other party was pulling in spiritual energy at, Zhang Xuan's eyelids twitched.

As expected of a 4-star master teacher, his means were indeed exceptional.

"Flaws!"

Given that the other party was operating his cultivation technique, a book immediately appeared in the Library of Heaven's Path.

Zhang Xuan quickly flipped through it.

"Su Fan, 4-star primary master teacher, Transcendent Mortal cultivator, an elder of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance's Master Teacher Pavilion. Cultivation technique: Miniature Solar Art. Flaws: ..."

Su Fan's information was recorded in detail in the book.

After using the golden page and assimilating the knowledge in all of the books of the Library of Heaven's Path into his head, Zhang Xuan already knew that beyond the Fighter 9 dans was [Transcendent Mortal].

The Fighter 9 dans was actually a stage to bring the strength of a mortal to the very limits. From there on, one would surpass his mortality to reach higher realms.

Just like the Fighter 9 dans, the Transcendent Mortal realm also had 9 dans. However, as Tianwu Kingdom didn't have access to books of that level, there wasn't any detail description on it.

However, given that the person before him was a Transcendent

Mortal expert, regardless of whether it was his physical body, spirit, or level of existence, he had already surpassed that of Zhizun realm to reach the heights unattainable by mortals.

It was just like the gap between a Phantom weapon and a Spirit weapon.

Their level of existence was completely different from one another.

After reading through the flaws written in the book, a bizarre look flashed on Zhang Xuan's face.

...

The moment Su shi started cultivating, Ling shi hurriedly turned his gaze onto Yang shi.

As an old buddy of the former, Ling shi knew about this problem as well. He searched through countless books and even asked a higher tiered guild through the Communication Wall about the matter. However, no one had been able to answer this question.

Since Su shi had brought up this problem, Ling shi was curious to see how Yang shi would deal with this situation.

Given that the other party was likely to be a master teacher ranked beyond 6-star, seeing how he dealt with problems and learning from him might prove to be helpful to him for his

advancement in the occupation.

Thus, he focused his all of his attention on Yang shi, intent on catching every single action of his.

However, after taking a brief look, a deep crease furrowed on his forehead, and doubts sprouted in his mind.

It was normal for master teachers to ask of the other party to display their cultivation technique or battle technique and observe it intently so as to determine the problems within them. However... Yang shi closed his eyes right after catching a glimpse, and fell motionless. What in the world was he up to?

Don't you have the Eye of Insight?

Shouldn't you use this ability to determine the faults in his cultivation?

Why aren't you using it?

On top of that, the faults in cultivation techniques tend to be deeper than battle techniques. You should at least observe it for a while longer and even ask him some questions about the matter before making a decision!

To do nothing at all, and close your eyes as though you are sleeping... What kind of diagnosis method is that?

Ling shi was baffled.

Master teachers were similar to physicians in several ways. One had to observe carefully to determine the crux of a problem before dealing with it at the very root.

As a 4-star master teacher, Ling shi knew more than ten thousand diagnosis methods, but none of it consisted of a momentary glimpse before closing one's eyes and falling into a daze...

"It can't be that... even he can't solve it?"

A thought appeared in Ling shi's mind.

Given how the other party possessed the Eye of Insight, he bore no doubts toward the other party's identity. However, he couldn't bear to see his good buddy to be disappointed once more.

"Alright, it's enough!"

At this moment, Yang shi finally opened his eyes and said. There wasn't a single emotion that could be seen on his face.

"Yes!"

Calming down his cultivation, Su shi stared at Yang shi

hopefully.

"Yang shi... Is there a solution?" Ling shi asked carefully.

Given how the other party closed his eyes right after catching a glimpse... He didn't think it was likely, but that couldn't stop him from hoping.

"Solution?"

Zhang Xuan shook his head. "There's no problem with his cultivation. The Miniature Solar Art is also very compatible with his physique!"

"Then..."

The duo was stunned.

If there was nothing wrong with his cultivation, and his cultivation technique was compatible with him as well, then why would he be unable to continue upon coming to the seventh circulation?

"You wish to reach the eighth circulation?"

Seeing the duo fall silent, Zhang Xuan gazed at Su shi and asked.

"Yes! I've been stuck at the seventh circulation for more than five years already, but I'm still unable to find the method to achieve a breakthrough..." Su shi hurriedly nodded his head.

The cultivation technique that he practiced, the Miniature Solar Art, was a Spirit cultivation technique. It had been more than fifty years since he started cultivating the technique, and he had endured intense heat and frigid chill innumerable times to master it. He thought that he could try for the ninth circulation, the highest realm of the technique, at a single go to achieve a breakthrough in his cultivation...

But he couldn't have imagined that he would be stuck at the seventh circulation.

For five consecutive years, his cultivation had stagnated. He had asked countless master teachers about this matter, and numerous elders of the guild even sat together to inspect this matter. However, none of them was able to determine the root of the problem.

"If you wish to reach eighth circulation, then listen to my instructions. Don't try to retaliate and don't harbor any doubts!"

Zhang Xuan stood up and slowly walked toward Su shi with his hands behind his back.

"Alright!" Su shi agreed without any hesitation.

The person before him was an expert who groomed a Celestial Master Teacher. Since the other party was willing to help him, this was an extremely good opportunity for him.

"Alright. Start cultivating once more. I'll use a special method for you to pass the seventh circulation, but before that, you have to close your eyes. No matter what happens, just focus all of your attention on driving your cultivation technique!" Zhang Xuan said gravely.

"Yes!"

Still seated cross-legged on the floor, Su shi took a deep breath and started to cultivate once more.

"You can't sit, you have to cultivate in the horse stance!" Zhang Xuan instructed.

"Cultivate in the horse stance?"

Su shi was taken aback, but he nodded his head without much hesitation.

At his level, he was more than capable of multitasking. Putting aside cultivating while in a horse stance, he could even cultivate while executing a battle technique.

"Alright, I'll begin then!"

Thus, Su shi took a deep breath and closed his eyes.

Gu gu gu gu!

The spiritual energy from the air began to be pulled into his body once more.

The Miniature Solar Art induced concentrated yang energy to be infused into one's zhenqi, thus granting one strength far greater than those of the same cultivation realm.

This was precisely the reason why, even though Su shi and Ling shi were both 4-star primary master teachers, the former possessed a much higher standing.

Su shi reached a state of imperturbability as soon as he began. Satisfied, Zhang Xuan nodded. He circled around the other party before turning over to Ling shi.

"Do you wish to help him?"

Ling shi was taken aback. "How can I help him?"

Shouldn't your guidance be the key to his breakthrough? I have a play in this matter as well?

"Just listen to my commands!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Yes!" Ling shi agreed.

The other party's action of closing his eyes after a glimpse had already left him doubtful. Yet, at this moment, the other party was asking him to help him in this matter. Ling shi's curiosity was piqued.

He wanted to see what kind of method the other party would use to help Ling shi to reach the eighth circulation, and what kind of role he would play in the matter.

"Hold on for a moment!"

After hearing Ling shi agree to the matter, Zhang Xuan stood silently on the spot, staring intently at Su shi impassively.

Gu gu gu!

Along with Su shi's cultivation, his aura gradually grew stronger and stronger, as though a dragon awakening from his slumber.

"Fourth circulation... Fifth circulation... Sixth circulation!"

Feeling the aura on the other party slowly growing more and more powerful, Ling shi's expression turned graver and graver.

The two of them were close buddies, and Su shi had cultivated

the Miniature Solar Art before Ling shi on numerous occasion, so he was well aware of the details of his cultivation technique, as well as when the problem would occur.

Kacha!

The sixth circulation came to an end, and as soon as the seventh circulation began, 'jiya!', a crisp sound echoed from Su shi's bones, and it sounded as though something had broken. Then, his flesh started to tear apart, and blood spilled out from the lacerations.

In the blink of an eye, the scholarly-looking Su shi suddenly became a demon that crawled out from hell.

"Yang shi, Su shi... might be unable to hold on any longer..."

Upon seeing the state of his old buddy, anxiety showed on Ling shi's face.

Based on his understanding, this was the limit of the other party. Any further than that might cause severe injuries to him.

It was precisely because of his body being unable to withstand the cultivation technique that the cultivation of his old buddy had remained stagnant for the past five years. This was also why he was intent on visiting Yang shi after hearing about his incredible feats.

"Un! Let's begin now, come over here!"

Nodding, Zhang Xuan beckoned Ling shi over.

"Alright!"

Ling shi hurriedly rushed over.

"You just have to do this..."

Zhang Xuan sent him a telepathic message, explaining his 'secret technique' to him clearly.

"This... this..."

Upon hearing Yang shi's 'secret technique', the edges of Ling shi's mouth twitched, and his entire body froze on the spot. He was already on the verge of tears.

What the heck was this solution? Are you trying to kill him through my hands?

"Will it... really work?"

Chapter 404: Unfathomable Yang shi (3)

"It's worth a try!"

After which, Zhang Xuan walked back to his seat and sat down calmly. Then, he poured himself a cup of tea and silently sipped on it.

"Try?" Ling shi spewed blood.

The method you brought up is obviously a murder attempt! I thought that you are confident in this matter. To think that it would only be a... 'try'!

What if it doesn't succeed? Won't Su shi die for real?

I will have to bear the crime of killing a comrade if that happens!

"Yang shi... Is there any other possible solution?" Ling shi asked, hesitant to use Zhang Xuan's method.

Zhang Xuan couldn't be bothered to answer Ling shi's question. He sat quietly on the spot, not even sparing the latter a glance.

Upon seeing his attitude, Ling shi knew that it was impossible to pry anything out of his mouth even if there was another solution. Thus, he turned his gaze to Su shi hesitantly.

What the hell was this! The one who was afflicted with the problem was Su shi, and the one who wanted to pass the seventh circulation was him as well, then why was the one who was in dilemma him...

"How is it? Hurry up! I can't hang on any longer..."

While Ling shi was still conflicted, Su shi bellowed with a savage expression.

He had already held onto the seventh circulation for quite a period of time now. If nothing was done, he would surely be severely injured once more, and this attempt would end in failure.

In the past, that was the case as well. Every time he tried to cultivate this technique, he would have to rest for at least a month.

Honestly speaking, Su shi felt stifled as well. What was wrong with this old buddy of his?

Since Yang shi had already told him the solution to the problem, he should hurry up. What was he hesitating for? Did he want to see him fail this attempt and be stuck in bed for another month?

"Alright then!"

Hearing the other party's urging, Ling shi gritted his teeth and walked over. Then, with a look of pity, he said, "Su shi, I'm sorry!"

"Sorry?"

Su shi was taken aback.

Using the 'secret technique' to help me pass the seventh circulation is helping me, so what do you mean by 'sorry'?

Before Su shi could make sense of the situation, he suddenly felt a strong shock wave from beneath his crotch.

"You..."

Just the immense shock wave he felt caused Su shi's soul to almost leave his body in fright.

If the attack were to strike him, he would surely be crippled! There was no doubt about it!

Even though he was already old and it wasn't of any use already, it was still a part of his body. What in the world are you trying to do...

"Don't move!"

Just as Su shi was about to twist and avoid the attack, Yang shi's stern voice echoed. The slight moment of hesitation sealed his fate. Ling shi's leg flew swiftly upward.

Peng!

Su shi's face immediately distorted. His vision darkened, and an intense pain struck his entire body from his crotch, causing him to almost faint on the spot.

Ling Yuheng, you'd better remember this...

Howling furiously in his heart, he was just about to tear the person before him apart when a giant palm struck his head.

After seeing that he was still alive after having his crotch struck, the other party wanted to finish him off with a slap?

"You..."

Su shi burst into tears.

Didn't Yang shi get you to use that 'secret technique' he taught you? Why are you beating me up instead?

You don't think that crippling me is enough, so you wish to claim my life as well?

Stifled, Su shi tried to avoid the attack but to no avail.

In terms of strength, the two of them were on par. Even if Su shi could defeat Ling shi, it would at least take a thousand blows. Now that his crotch had been struck, and unimaginable pain was coursing through his body, how could he possibly be in the condition to avoid the other party's attack?

Furthermore, the other party used his zhenqi to seal his surroundings, causing him to be unable to move at all. Before he could struggle free, the other party's palm had already struck his head.

Peng!

His vision turned dark, and he spurted a mouthful of blood.

But all of a sudden, Su shi felt a powerful strength gushing from his dantian, and unable to hold himself back anymore, he roared furiously.

Boom!

A powerful shock wave immediately gushed forth from him, and cracks swiftly spread across the floor tiles as though a spider web. At the same moment, the tables and chairs in the vicinity was reduced to dust.

Kacha!

As though having eaten some nutritious tonic, his zhenqi, which

had stopped moving, suddenly formed a torrent, and having broken through the countless shackles from before, it performed another circulation in his body.

The eighth circulation!

"I suc-succeeded?"

Recovering from his pain, Su shi sensed the raging and seemingly endless zhenqi flowing through his body, and he froze for a moment before frenzied delight grasped him.

Never in his dreams did he expect to break through the obstruction which had hindered him for five years just like that...

"It worked?"

Ling shi thought that his friendship with the other party would have come to an end after he crippled him and struck him on his face. He didn't expect the other party's aura to suddenly surge, allowing him to break through his bottleneck at the seventh circulation.

He hurriedly turned to look at Yang shi. As though knowing that this would happen, the other party was still drinking his tea calmly, not paying any heed to the situation here.

"This is a problem which even the pavilion master and a 5-star master teacher couldn't solve. Yet, with a single kick and slap..."

Ling shi's eyes opened wide, and his body trembled slightly.

He knew that it was impossible for Yang shi to be simple, given how he was able to groom a student of Zhang Xuan's caliber, but... he didn't think that he would be so impressive!

With a single glance, the other party had already found the root of the problem, as well as the solution to it. On top of that, he didn't even use his Eye of Insight at all. Yang shi's capability was already beyond his imagination.

"Just that... isn't the solution... a little way too ridiculous..."

After recovering from his shock, Ling shi's first reaction was speechlessness.

When other master teachers guided someone, they would often alter their cultivation technique, point out the errors in their cultivation, recommend them some effective pills, or something along those lines. Yet, this fellow's guidance was actually a kick and a slap...

It was simple, but...

Upon recalling the kick just now, Ling shi's mouth couldn't help but twitch.

Even if the other party wasn't crippled, he would have to at least recuperate for two years before being able to use it once more.

"Yang shi, thank you for helping me achieve a breakthrough..."

At this moment, Su shi had finally finished his cultivation, and his aura felt significantly stronger than before. Excited, he hurriedly clasped his hand to thank Yang shi.

Having reached the eighth circulation, his cultivation rose significantly as well, even though it was still slightly unstable as he hadn't reinforced yet it. But in any case, he had managed to take a step forward after five years of stagnation.

Just that... the price was a little way too high!

The excruciating pain left his legs shaking non-stop, and cold sweat trickled down his forehead profusely. If not in consideration for his image, he would have definitely bent down and scrunched in a C shape.

"Un!"

Putting down his teacup, Zhang Xuan stood up and gazed at the duo calmly, "Do you all understand the reason behind this?"

"Yang shi, please enlighten us!" The duo gazed at one another before bowing toward Yang shi.

It was unfathomable how a single kick and a slap could work such miracles.

Even though they had seen the sight for themselves, they still couldn't help but find it inconceivable.

Seeing the incomprehension in their eyes, Zhang Xuan shook his head and turned to Su shi.

"The technique you cultivate is Miniature Solar Art, and your physical constitution also possesses overwhelming yang energy. Without a doubt, this cultivation technique complements you very well! Rationally speaking, it shouldn't be a problem for you to reach the eighth circulation. However..."

With a deep gaze with slight traces of regret within, Zhang Xuan continued, "Time trickles on like a relentless river. As you age, your physical function slowly deteriorates, and the yang energy within your body is already unable to keep up with your cultivation technique! If I'm not wrong, you don't have much of an interest in the opposite gender now, right?"

"I..."

Su shi felt a little awkward.

As he aged and his physical functions deteriorate, his interest toward the opposite gender slowly died down.

However, this was his secret. After having such a matter pointed out by the other party, his face immediately flushed in embarrassment.

What men feared was having their impotency pointed out.

"Since even the opposite gender is unable to attract you, it goes to show that the decline of your yang energy has already reached a severe state. Without sufficient yang energy to sustain your cultivation technique, no matter how formidable you are, you won't be able to drive it as easily as you used to."

Disregarding the other party's embarrassment, Zhang Xuan continued explaining, "The crotch isn't just the symbol of one's masculinity, it's also the origin of yang energy in a man. As such, when Ling shi struck on it with his might, the yang energy accumulated within immediately gushed out, granting you with a further drive for your cultivation technique."

"But of course, this didn't necessarily guarantee that you can exceed the seventh circulation. Just in case, I had him strike your head as well."

"The head is where the yang energy gathers at! After the origin has been struck, the dissipated yang energy would gather at your head. Thus, when Ling shi struck your head, you immediately broke through your bottleneck, reaching the eighth circulation!"

Chuckling lightly, Zhang Xuan stood up with his hands behind

his back. The shadow behind him extended far, making him look incomparably large and powerful.

"This..."

The duo was shocked.

The other party had put it simply, but as master teachers, they knew how difficult the matter was.

While it was true that the crotch was the birth of yang energy, it was also the weakest spot of a man. On top of that, the head was an even more vital region. To strike the both of them consecutively...

If there was the slightest error in the other party's conjecture, Su shi would have died!

To have such grasp over Su shi's illness, was this person before them... still a human?

"Incredible! Yang shi is truly incredible..."

Glancing at one another, the same thought appeared in the duo at once.

To be able to identify his problem with a single glance accurately and accurately determining the amount of strength Ling shi should put into his attack in just this short period of time... There was no

one that they knew who was capable of such a feat!

To think that they thought that Yang shi would be of equal standing as them! In the end, there wasn't any basis of comparison between them at all, they were at completely different levels!

As expected of the master teacher who had comprehended Eye of Insight, fearsome!

"You should hurry up and condition yourself. Your injuries are also quite severe this time around."

Seeing the expression of the duo, Zhang Xuan knew that he had managed to hoodwink the duo, and he inwardly heaved a sigh of relief. At the same time, he looked at Su shi in sympathy.

If Zhang Xuan made a move himself, he could use Heaven's Path zhenqi to stimulate the other party's acupoints to release the accumulated yang energy. This would produce the similar effect of breaking through the seventh circulation as well.

However, the other party would surely be able to see through the uniqueness of his Heaven's Path zhenqi, as well as his cultivation. If so, he would give himself in. Thus, after much contemplation, he decided to go with this.

However, this was indeed a little too violent...

Even Zhang Xuan couldn't help but feel a chill at his crotch upon

seeing the sight.

"Yes..."

Upon hearing those words, Su shi heaved a sigh of relief. Putting everything aside, he immediately sat down and drove his cultivation, warding off the excruciating pain he was suffering from the two violent blows.

"Yang shi, Su shi has managed to reach the eighth circulation this time, but... if he wants to try for the ninth circulation, what should he do?"

At this moment, Ling shi couldn't help but ask.

Only after reaching the highest level, the ninth circulation, could Su shi attempt to reach for higher realms. Given how difficult it was for him to reach the eighth circulation already, what should he do to reach the ninth circulation?

"Simple! Just use the same method. If a single kick doesn't work, then kick another time. If it still doesn't work, then kick it ten more times... Eventually, sufficient yang energy should be stimulated for his breakthrough!" Zhang Xuan replied calmly.

"Ten times?"

Ling shi's sweat immediately flowed down profusely.

At the same time, Su shi's body trembled upon hearing those words, and his cultivation nearly went berserk.

The heck...

If only that I knew this would happen, I shouldn't have picked up this cultivation technique!

...

While the two master teachers were on the verge of a breakdown, not too far away, in the Lin Residence, a giant savage beast flew straight over. Hu! It landed at the center of the courtyard, and two men and a lady alighted from its back.

Chapter 405: The Formidable Sun Qiang

"This is the Lin Clan Residence?"

As the number one clan in Tianwu Kingdom, even if it was late at night, the Lin Clan Residence should have been bustling with guests.

However, the empty courtyard was wrecked, and there wasn't a single guard or servant to be seen.

It was completely different from how she remembered it.

"Liu Cheng, I'm going to kill you..."

Princess Consort Lin Long's beautiful eyes widened in rage, and her black hair drifted slightly despite the absence of wind. Her furious howl reverberated within the residence.

When she received the news back then, the person named Liu Cheng was in the midst of dealing with the Lin Clan Residence. Without a doubt, that fellow must be the culprit!

"Hurry up and look around to find my father and my little brother. If anything happens to them, I want the entire Tianwu Kingdom to be buried along with them!"

Her silver teeth clenched tightly in resentment, and deep killing

intent flashed in her eyes.

How dare a Tier 1 Kingdom, a trash-like existence whom wasn't worthy of her consideration, lay its hands on her Lin Clan? It was courting death!

To dare assault the Lin Clan, that Liu Cheng had to die!

And for the Tianwu royal family to know of the matter but stay idle, it must pay the price as well!

"Yes!" The two men behind her immediately darted away.

Eastern Palace Commander Liang Qingming possessed the strength of a Zhizun realm advanced stage, while Beast Tamer Zhou Jin, who tagged along with the two of them, had reached Zhizun realm primary stage.

The two Zhizun realm experts moved swiftly, and before long, they reported back to the princess consort.

"Your Highness, Clan Head Lin and Young Master Lin are over there!"

Upon hearing that her father and younger brother weren't dead yet, Lin Long heaved a sigh of relief. She hurried over, and entered a giant hall. With a single look, her face immediately crumbled.

The duo was alive, but they were no different from being dead.

Their cultivation had been dissipated, and there wasn't a single spot on them that was intact. Heavily injured, even if they were to be saved at this point, they were already crippled.

The younger of the duo was unconscious, and if not for his faint breathing one would have thought that he were dead.

"Long-er, you must exact vengeance for us!"

Upon seeing her walk over, Lin Ruotian immediately rushed over, as though meeting his savior.

Back then, even though Lu Chong didn't kill him, he had Hall Master Liao plant at least seven lethal poison all over his body, causing him to be in agony at every single moment.

On top of that, the Lin Clan's fall from grace caused all of their past enemies to come knocking. The torture and humiliation he'd suffered made him tempted to commit suicide.

If not for a tenacious drive pushing him on to wait for her daughter and have her exact vengeance for him, he would have already given in.

"What happened?"

Lin Long hurriedly fed the other party a recovery pill before asking.

"It's... Liu Cheng! No, to be precise, it's 2-star Master Teacher Zhang Xuan! His student is that bastard who fled from the Qu Clan two years ago..."

After consuming the pill, Lin Ruotian recovered some of his stamina. Gritting his teeth, he started recounting the matter.

But of course, all he talked about was how he was insulted and humiliated by the other party. As for the cause of the matter, as well as the destruction of the Qu Clan, he didn't bother to fill the other party in on the details. But in any case, it was unlikely that the other party would care either.

"Zhang Xuan?"

Lin Long narrowed her eyes and bellowed, "Commander Liang, head to the Master Teacher Pavilion at this moment and capture Zhang Xuan! I want him to pay the price and let everyone know that only death awaits those who dares to offend our Lin Clan!"

"Your Highness, please reconsider your orders. This Zhang Xuan is a 2-star master teacher, and a genius at that. He's likely to be a target of protection of the Master Teacher Pavilion..."

Frowning, Liang Qingming tried to persuade the other party.

A 2-star primary master teacher didn't mean much to Xuanyuan Kingdom.

However, killing a master teacher publicly might result in a backlash. Even Xuanyuan Kingdom couldn't afford to incur the wrath of the Master Teacher Pavilion.

"He destroyed my family and killed my kin. So what if he has the backing of the Master Teacher Pavilion? Can a master teacher act unreasonably just because he has backing? Besides, the Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher Pavilion's Pavilion Master Luo is a close friend of the crown prince. As long as we explain the situation to him, he should overlook the matter!"

Lin Long's eyes reddened in fury.

The pavilion master of Xuanyuan Kingdom's Master Teacher Pavilion was Luo Qianhong. With his backing, Lin Long had very little worry. After all, it wasn't beneficial for him to turn against the future emperor over such a minor character.

"Yes!" Seeing the other party's insistence, Liang Qingming could only obey her orders. Nodding, he was just about to leave when another voice sounded.

"Wait a moment, I want to go with you. I want to see how this fellow is torn apart..."

The savagery on the emaciated face of Lin Ruotian created an

extremely eerie sight, as though a demon who had climbed out of hell.

"Alright, let's go together!"

Seeing her father's state, Lin Long immediately agreed to the matter.

Thus, the group climbed onto the Gold-scaled Lightning Beast and darted into the skies.

"I've been keeping tabs on that scoundrel. He isn't in the Master Teacher Pavilion now, but in a residence not too far away!" Lin Ruotian said.

Knowing that his daughter would rush in as soon as she could to exact vengeance, he had the final loyal servants of the Lin Clan keep an eye on Zhang Xuan... Instead of escaping, the other party had been holing himself in his residence.

Boom!

Given the speed of the Gold-scaled Lightning Beast, it only took a few moments for it to reach the skies above the residence.

"Commander Liang, I hope that you can capture him alive. I want to torture him slowly to his death..."

With a face distorted in savagery, madness shone on Lin Ruotian's face.

As the father of the princess consort of Xuanyuan Kingdom, he knew some of the important figures around the crown prince, and Liang Qingming was one of them.

Based on what he knew, the other party possessed a strength of Zhizun realm advanced stage!

With such strength, he could wipe out the entire Tianwu Kingdom easily!

Even the guardian beast of Tianwu royal family was only at Zhizun realm primary stage. An expert of this caliber could easily crush it to death.

"Don't worry!" Liang Qingming nodded. He walked up to the head of the Gold-scaled Lightning Beast and gazed coldly at the residence below. The might of a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert immediately shrouded the entire area, and a cold voice boomed.

"Zhang Xuan, come out and die!"

Boom!

His voice was infused with the zhenqi of a Zhizun expert, and the entire capital trembled before it.

"Come out and die?"

"Shit, the princess consort of the Lin Clan is here!"

"This is bad. Judging from the might from his voice itself, he's at least a Zhizun realm expert. Can Zhang shi... really stand against him?"

"Zhang shi might be strong, but he's still far from a match from Zhizun realm experts. This time, he's really in trouble..."

...

The voice alarmed the entire population of Tianwu Royal City, and their faces paled.

The backing of the Lin Clan was no secret. Even though there hadn't been any movement from Xuanyuan Kingdom's side the past few days, they knew that it was only the calm before the storm.

At this moment, given that fearless and mighty voice and the gigantic savage beast flying in the air, without a doubt, the other party... was here!

They were here to exact vengeance!

"Zhizun realm... advanced stage? If I'm not wrong, that must be the commander of the Crown Prince Residence, Liang Qingming!"

In the palace, Mo Tianxue also heard the voice as well. Rushing up to the highest tower, he saw the middle-aged man on top of the savage beast, and his lips quivered in fear.

As a vassal state, he still knew a little about the various powers and important figures in Xuanyuan Kingdom. Given the powerful might he shown, without a doubt, this middle-aged man had to be the Zhizun realm advanced stage commander!

"Zhizun realm advanced stage? Isn't Zhang shi in trouble then?"

Mo Yu's body swayed, and anxiety filled her.

Even though Zhang Xuan had produced miracles time and time again, there was a huge gap between Zhizun realm advanced stage and Half-Zhizun.

To think that Lin Long would actually send such a person here! How in the world could Zhang shi withstand such overwhelming strength?

"There's... nothing we can do! On top of that... it seems like Tianwu Kingdom is doomed as well..." Mo Tianxue's body shuddered.

The other party was a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert. No

strategy would work when there was such a humongous disparity in strength.

Even the guardian beast was helpless in this situation.

They weren't a match at all.

"Xiao Yu, take this ring and escape swiftly. As long as you survive, even if the kingdom is destroyed, it can still be rebuilt..." Mo Tianxue hurriedly took off the storage ring from his forefinger and passed it over to Mo Yu.

Mo Yu was talented and smart. If Tianwu Kingdom were to be destroyed today, she would be the only hope to rebuilding it from ruins. No matter what, she mustn't die here.

Otherwise, Mo Tianxue wouldn't be able to face the predecessors of the Mo Clan even upon death.

"Father..."

Mo Yu's body trembled in agitation.

She was unwilling to abandon her father, but she knew that this was the best solution they had.

Back then, Lin Long could eradicate the entire Qu Clan over such a minor matter. Given that how the entire Lin Clan was destroyed

this time around, it was highly possible that she would turn her rage to Tianwu royal family after Zhang shi dies!

It was highly possible that she would wipe out all that possessed the royal blood in vengeance.

"Alright, go. I can't go with you... If I were to leave now, there'd be a pandemonium. My fate will be one with Tianwu Kingdom!" Mo Tianxue said determinedly.

As the emperor of the kingdom, he couldn't abandon his men now.

"Father..."

Knowing that his death was sealed with this decision, Mo Yu's body trembled. She wanted to say something, but at that moment, an impatient voice echoed from the Zhang Xuan's residence.

"Audacious! Which idiot is causing a ruckus here? You must be tired of living! If you wish to meet the young master, go out and kneel!"

"Ah?"

Mo Yu and Mo Tianxue were stunned.

Given the huge uproar Liang Qingming stirred, almost every

single person in Tianwu Royal City was staring at this situation intently. Upon hearing those words, they were dumbstruck, and they nearly spurted blood.

This was a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert from Xuanyuan Kingdom! To speak such words...

Everyone immediately hurriedly leaped to the highest location to see who was the one speaking. Perhaps, it might be a formidable figure who could save Tianwu Kingdom from this impending catastrophe. However, with a single look, they nearly keeled over.

It was a potbellied middle-aged man... Butler Sun.

In the past few days, quite a few people have come into contact with this fellow, so many knew that his cultivation was only at Pigu realm pinnacle. Even in Tianwu Kingdom, he stood at the very bottom of the power pyramid...

With such weak cultivation... How did he find the guts to spout such brazen words?

For you to dare spout such words, do you know how powerful is that guy in the sky?

Mo Yu and Mo Tianxue glanced at one another, and they trembled in fear.

At Zhizun realm advanced stage, the other party could be

considered as an expert of the highest tier even in Xuanyuan Kingdom. For a mere Pigu realm butler to act so arrogantly...

The heck!

This matter was already hard to resolve, and this fellow just had to anger him further.

Without a doubt, a festival of blood would soon begin in this city.

"You..."

While everyone was in a frenzy, Liang Qingming nearly fell from the Gold-scaled Lightning Beast upon hearing those words.

He was a famous and respected figure even in Xuanyuan Kingdom. He thought that his bellow would send these insignificant ants from a backward kingdom trembling in fear, but to think that... there would be someone who would disregard him, even ordering him to kneel outside...

The heck!

Are you brave, or is there a screw loose in your head?

"I'll count to three. Get Zhang Xuan to scramble out here, or else, I'll destroy the entire residence and have everyone within accompany him to hell!"

Liang Qingming's face twitched furiously.

Chapter 406: Slapping the Princess Consort

Liang Qingming thought that this threat would send the plump man and the servants of the residence into chaos. Under the threat of such an expert, they would surely be scrambling to run as far as they can.

But with a single look, his body swayed once more.

The personnel in the residence were still working as per normal, as though his presence meant nothing at all. Those who were cultivating continued cultivating, those who were cooking continued cooking, those who were washing continued washing... It was as though he was transparent!

Especially for that fatty below, he stared at him with utmost disdain, as though he was staring at an idiot.

The heck!

What was this situation?

Shouldn't a mere 2-star primary master teacher of a Tier 1 Kingdom be trembling silently in fear upon seeing a Zhizun realm expert like him?

Master teachers were the strongest among the same cultivation realm, but such a huge disparity in cultivation couldn't be made up with skills!

It was one thing for Zhang Xuan to disregard him, but how could that weak fatty act so arrogantly as well?

Wasn't he afraid of being killed?

This was blatant disrespect!

As a commander under the direct command of the crown prince, as well as a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert, he was a feared existence no matter where he went. Everyone he walked by would have to bow respectfully to him, and with a bellow, even the emperor of Tianwu Kingdom, Mo Tianxue, would have to kneel to him...

How dare this weak fatty show such contempt to him!

Contempt your head!

The more he thought about it, the more furious he got. At that moment, the fatty's voice sounded once more.

"Three counts? Hurry up then, but don't say that I didn't warn you. This might be the three final counts you'll ever make..."

"Damn it!"

Commander Liang's face turned as black as charcoal, and smoke

was threatening to billow from his head.

I am the one who is going to slaughter you, and you say that it's the three final counts I will ever make?

You dare to disregard my honor as a Zhizun realm cultivator?

You damned fatty, I will slice you apart...

Coming to the limit of his tolerance, Commander Liang was just about to lash out and kill a few people to give a stern warning to the others when, 'jiya!', the doors to the main hall opened, and three figures walked out.

The first one who walked out was a middle-aged man in his forties, and following behind him were two elders dressed in master teacher robes.

However, even the head of Tianwu Kingdom's Master Teacher Pavilion was only at Zongshi realm pinnacle, so he automatically disregarded the duo.

"What's going on? Why is there such a ruckus out here?"

Without even lifting his head, the middle-aged man frowned and looked at that plump man.

"Old master, that fellow above demands to meet young master.

What a joke, who does he think he is? Does he think that a nobody like him can meet the young master?

"So, I asked him to scram."

"Un, well done!" The middle-aged man nodded, approving the plump man words.

Pu!

Liang Qingming staggered once more.

It was one thing for that plump man to be spouting nonsense, but to think that the middle-aged man, who seemed like the owner of the residence, to behave the same as well... This was getting way out of hand!

Initially, Liang Qingming was still hesitant to go too far. After all, the other party was a member of the Master Teacher Pavilion. If things were to blow up, it might end in disaster. However, blinded by his rage, he couldn't care less about the consequences now.

"Since you all are courting death, I'll grant you your wish..."

Furious, Liang Qingming's thrust his hand, and an overwhelming strength descended from the skies. A huge handprint pushed down straight toward the crowd in the residence.

Phantom pinnacle battle technique, Adamantine Palm!

The indestructible Adamantine Palm caused a huge gale to blow in the surroundings, and leaves gushed into the air.

The palm possessed a strength beyond 30,000 ding. Even a Zhizun realm intermediate expert would be crushed to smithereens in an instant under the overwhelming force.

Liang Qingming thought that the other party would tremble in fear immediately after seeing the might of his attack, but the middle-aged man only glanced impassively at the elder beside him and said, "Little Su, I'll leave this fellow to you. Shoot him down along with that bird in the air!"

"Yes, Yang shi!"

The elder who was addressed as 'Little Su' stepped forward.

This 'Little Su' wasn't of huge stature, and there wasn't any imposing disposition to him. More importantly, his legs were clamped tightly together, and his face was pale. It seemed as though he was suffering from some indescribable agony.

His hair was unkempt, and he looked as though he had just been beaten up. No matter how Liang Qingming looked at him, this Little Su didn't seem like an expert.

To send such a fellow to deal with him?

Were the people below insane?

He wasn't just the only one. The various experts and influences were also dazed, and the corner of their lips twitched intensely.

This was a top-notch expert from Xuanyuan Kingdom! Their princess consort had brought him here to kill you, you should at least send someone fitting to deal with him. What in the world do you mean by sending that pale-faced clamped-legs elder?

Aren't you looking down on the other party too much!

Su Shi and Ling Shi arriving at the capital was a confidential secret of the Master Teacher Pavilion. Thus, no one knew that these two ordinary-looking fellows were actually unimaginably powerful experts.

"Hmph!"

Just when everyone's heads were spinning from this ridiculous sight, this 'Little Su' lifted his head and harrumphed coldly.

Huala!

His voice wasn't particularly loud, but it sounded as though a metal being burst apart. Upon colliding with the air, the latter

immediately dissipated without any resistance.

Peng!

After which, Liang Qingming felt a sharp pain on his chest, as though he had been pierced by a sword. A mouthful of blood spewed out, and his vision darkened slightly. His entire body trembled from the impact, and he nearly fell down from the savage beast.

"This... a Transcendent Mortal expert?"

The other party didn't even move at all. With just a slight harrumph, he was able to neutralize his attack and injure him. No matter how foolish Liang Qingming was, it was clear that this 'Little Su' was beyond his means.

Liang Qingming's eyes narrowed, and his body trembled in fear.

There wasn't even a single Transcendent Mortal expert in Xuanyuan Kingdom! How could one appear in a Tier 1 Kingdom?

Furthermore, given the powerful might the other party was able to harness with a single sound... Even within the Transcendent Mortal realm, this Little Su must have reached a high level of accomplishment!

"This..."

The crowd of spectators who were looking at the situation widened their eyes, and their hearts nearly stopped from shock.

That weak-looking elder was actually able to neutralize a full strength attack from a Zhizun realm expert with harrumph, even nearly pushing the latter down the savage beast from the impact...

What was going on?

"This... Do you know this master teacher?" Mo Tianxue turned to ask his daughter.

Mo Tianxue didn't recognize this 'Little Su', but since the other party was dressed in the master teacher robe, he must be a member of the Master Teacher Pavilion.

Where in the world did this formidable figure come from?

His strength was way off the charts!

"This..." Mo Yu was taken aback by the sight as well.

When the Assembly Bell sounded, she wasn't able to return immediately, so she missed out on Su shi and Ling shi's introduction. After which, she left right after witnessing Zhang Xuan and Mo Hongyi's examination.

As such, she didn't know of the appearance of the two 4-star master teachers in the Master Teacher Pavilion.

Besides, even if she knew, she couldn't have imagined that someone would dare to call a 4-star master teacher 'Little Su'... To be able to command a 4-star master teacher, what kind of fearsome existence was that middle-aged man?

"Come down!"

Before anyone could recover from the shock, the slightly hunched 'Little Su' harrumphed yet again.

Huala!

It was as if a sword had sliced through the air. The Gold-scaled Lightning Beast couldn't even react before its body shuddered and plummeted.

Boom!

Along with the landing of the humongous savage beast, dust flew into the air. That arrogant fellow who had threatened to slaughter everyone within the residence crashed to the floor.

Falling from such a great height, it took great effort for Lin Long to regain consciousness. She immediately turned to her father and her younger brother, and with a single look, she nearly turned insane.

With this fall, the unconscious Lin Lang's spinal cord broke, and he could potentially breathe his last at any moment. There was no saving him anymore.

On the other hand, Lin Ruotian, who was still holding on to the vestiges of his consciousness, was spewing large mouthfuls of blood. His old wounds and new wounds gnawed at his vitality, making it a huge doubt whether he could survive from this ordeal.

Lin Long flew into a frenzy.

They were here to exact vengeance...

And yet, before they could kill a single person or even meet their primary target, Zhang Xuan, her father and her little brother were already nearly dead. She was also severely injured from the fall as well. What was this?

"Commander Liang, what are you doing? Hurry up and kill him..."

Seated in the room on the Gold-scaled Lightning Beast's back, Lin Long knew very little about the situation outside. All she heard was the conversation between the two. She thought that Liang Qingming was going easy on the other party, so she howled furiously at him.

"Kill him?"

Commander Liang's body trembled in agitation, and he nearly fainted.

How do I kill him?

This old fellow is a Transcendent Mortal expert! Are you trying to send me to my death?

How in the world did the wise crown prince marry a fool like you?

Su shi glanced at Liang Qingming.

"Kill me?"

Even though he had achieved a breakthrough in his cultivation, it did little to alleviate the intense pain he was suffering from. He was already in a bad mood, and upon hearing the woman on the savage beast's back talking about killing him, his face immediately darkened.

"Tha-that's not it... Elder, please calm down!"

Commander Liang shuddered, and he hurriedly rubbed his hands together to plead with the other party.

"Why are you so afraid of him? He's just a master teacher from a

Tier 1 Kingdom, what can he do to you?"

Seeing how useless her subordinate was, even going to the extent of calling the other party 'elder', Lin Long's rage erupted.

She was a smart person, but the situation with her father and her younger brother had clouded her mind. After the fall, they were already on the verge of dying, and at this moment, all that was on her mind was to exact vengeance for them.

"How dare you disregard a master teacher!" Su shi bellowed. "Slap her!"

Su shi was an amiable person, but as a 4-star master teacher, he had his own dignity as well. The other party was clearly disregarding the prestige of a master teacher, and this was a taboo for him.

"Yes..."

After hesitating for a moment, Liang Qingming eventually turned around and walked over to the room on top of the Gold-scaled Lightning Beast.

Even if the person he had to slap was the princess consort, he had no other choice. The person before him was a Transcendent Mortal expert. If he didn't obey his commands, all of them would die here today.

"Commander Liang, what are you doing?"

Upon seeing the other party walk in, Lin Long was taken aback. Before she could say anything else, the other party darted forward, and a slap flew straight toward her cheek.

Pah!

Without any time to react, Lin Long was sent flying by that slap. Her head crashed onto the ground, and her teeth fell onto the floor. Blood trickled down the edges of her lips.

She was a genius, and her cultivation progressed swiftly. However, due to the limitation of her age, she was only a Zongshi realm advanced stage cultivator. How could she avoid the attacks of a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert?

Pah pah pah pah!

Since the elder outside didn't ask him to stop, Commander Liang didn't dare to stop either. He walked up to Lin Long and continued striking her.

"You... You..."

After several consecutive slaps, her beautiful face swelled up as though a pig's face. The slaps had awoken her, and she immediately comprehended the situation here. With eyes overflowing with hatred, she glared at Su shi and that middle-aged

man, Yang shi.

Ever since her birth, all of the way until she became the princess consort, she had lived a smooth-sailing life, and she had never suffered such humiliation.

Her hatred was so deep that it couldn't be washed clean even if the water from three rivers were to run dry.

Chapter 407: Spirit Stones Grades

Translator: StarveCleric Editor: StarveCleric

"Enough!"

Seeing that the lady would die if the slapping continued on, Zhang Xuan waved his hands.

Just as admiration for Yang shi's magnanimity was welling up within Su shi and the others, his voice sounded, "Sun Qiang, call Lu Chong over. He should be the one slapping this woman!"

"..." Su shi and Ling shi.

"..." Mo Tianxue and Mo Yu.

This woman was the one who ordered the death of Lu Chong's entire family back then. Since the culprit was here, it was only fitting for Lu Chong to do the work.

Actually, Zhang Xuan didn't expect the princess consort to arrive so quickly.

However, the other party seemed to have lucked out. Since Su shi and Ling shi were here, their vengeance was destined to end in failure.

"Yes!" Sun Qiang walked into the residence, and before long, he returned with Lu Chong beside him.

"Grandteacher!"

On the way, Sun Qiang had briefly explained the situation to him, and knowing that the middle-aged man before him was Zhang Xuan's teacher, he immediately bowed respectfully upon his arrival.

"Grandteacher? Old master? I finally get it. This must be Zhang Xuan's elusive teacher, Yang Xuan!"

Those who were looking at the commotion suddenly came to a realization.

It was said that Zhang Xuan's teacher possessed unfathomable strength, and he even took in Pavilion Master Jiang as his student

Everyone thought that it was just a rumor and waved it off back then. To think that it would be true!

It was no wonder that Zhang Shi didn't hesitate in the least when he destroyed the Lin Clan! With such backing, there was indeed no need for him to worry about the consequences at all.

"Un, that woman is Lin Lang's elder sister, the princess consort of Xuanyuan Kingdom. I'll leave her to you!"

Upon seeing Lu Chong, Zhang Xuan gestured forward.

"Thank you, grandteacher..."

Seeing that the main culprit behind the deaths of his kin was right in front of him, how could Lu Chong hold himself back? With reddened eyes, he immediately dashed straight toward Lin Long.

"What do you intend to do? I'm the princess consort of Xuanyuan Kingdom. If you dare to touch me, I'll destroy your entire clan..."

Frightened, Lin Long retreated swiftly. However, before she could finish her words, she felt excruciating pain on her cheek and, 'peng!', she was sent flying to the side.

Even though her cultivation was higher than Lu Chong's, the consecutive slaps from Commander Liang had left her weak and faint-headed. Under such circumstances, how could she stand against Lu Chong? In just a short moment, she was pummeled to the point that she couldn't even utter a word, and there wasn't a single spot on her that wasn't bruised.

Liang Qingming wanted to help her, but seeing Su shi's gaze land on him from time to time, he was scared stiff.

If only he knew that this would happen, he wouldn't have accompanied the princess consort here. This wasn't exacting vengeance, this was waiting to be tortured...

"Grandteacher, thank you for fulfilling my wish!"

After he was done, Lu Chong walked back to Zhang Xuan and bowed deeply.

Just like with Lin Ruotian and the others, Lu Chong didn't kill her, but he crippled her cultivation.

This kind of punishment was definitely worse than death.

"Un!" Zhang Xuan waved his hands and said, "Alright, throw all of them out!"

He was currently the unparalleled expert, Yang shi. Since Su shi didn't kill the other party, he wasn't in a place to say anything else.

Lin Long was severely injured and this bodyguard was scared out of his wits, so Zhang Xuan reckoned that they wouldn't dare to do anything else. On top of that, with Yang shi serving as a deterrence, Xuanyuan Kingdom should be hesitant to take any drastic actions.

If Yang shi were to continue remaining idle while insisting for Su shi to eliminate them, the two 4-star master teachers might get suspicious.

Since they weren't a threat anymore, Zhang Xuan was unwilling

to take the gamble. Thus, he decided to throw them out for now.

"Yes!"

Su shi nodded. Grabbing onto empty air, he formed a huge palm with his zhenqi and grabbed the Gold-scaled Lightning Beast, Liang Qingming, and the others up before throwing all of them out.

"It-It's over?"

Mo Tianxue and Mo Yu glanced at one another in disbelief.

Initially, they thought that Lin Long's arrival would spell the doom of Tianwu Kingdom. Never in their dreams did they expect that the entire matter would be resolved so easily via the two people who appeared in Zhang Xuan's residence.

"Xiao Yu, go and check on the background of the two master teachers. Why are they so powerful? And how formidable must Zhang shi's teacher be to command them!" Mo Tianxue instructed after a moment of silence.

Since the danger was averted, there was no longer any need for Mo Yu to leave. Delighted, Mo Tianxue thought of paying a visit to these powerful figures.

"Yes!" Mo Yu nodded.

Even if her father didn't say anything, she had already intended to look into the matter.

To neutralize a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert with a harrumph, and to knock down a Zhizun realm intermediate stage savage beast with another...

The strength of this 'Little Su' far surpassed her imagination. At the very least, he had to be a 3-star master teacher!

Given that such a powerful figure had appeared in the Master Teacher Pavilion, it could be considered as a breach of responsibility for her to be ignorant of it.

...

After the incident, the group returned to the main hall.

Honestly speaking, Zhang Xuan was also astonished by Su shi's might.

He couldn't imagine that there would exist a person in the world who could render a Zhizun expert helpless with mere sound.

Even though he knew that the other party was incredibly powerful through the Library of Heaven's Path, he didn't think that he would be that impressive.

"Yang shi..."

Just as Zhang Xuan was wondering when he could gain such strength, Su shi turned to look at him.

"Un?"

"May I know... where Zhang shi is? I would like to discuss the matter of the Master Teacher Tournament with him."

After resting for a moment, Su shi had recovered considerably.

The main reason why they came over here from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance was for this matter. It wasn't easy to find a genius of Zhang Xuan's caliber, so how could they give up on him?

"He's currently cultivating in seclusion!"

Zhang Xuan waved his hands casually.

Su shi nodded in realization.

This explained why Zhang Xuan didn't appear despite the huge commotion.

Yang shi played a huge role in Zhang Xuan's growth, but his

current accomplishments were impossible without hard work on his part as well.

"Then... About the Master Teacher Tournament..."

Since the other party was in seclusion, it would be rude and dangerous to interrupt him at this moment. Su shi fell into a dilemma.

"You can tell me about it and I'll relay the message to him!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Yes..." Su shi began explaining, "The tests for the Master Teacher Tournament is decided by the heads of the Master Teacher Pavilions of the various powers participating each year, so there aren't any fixed rules. However, one thing I can confirm is that the rewards will be generous. Those who are placed high in the rankings will be awarded with spirit stones, as well as an opportunity to cultivate in a secret realm..."

Before he could finish his words, Yang shi's eyes gleamed, "Spirit stones?"

"Er... That's right!" Su shi nodded.

"Around how many will be awarded?" Yang shi stared at the other party expectantly.

He wasn't interested in the Master Teacher Tournament, but he

held high expectations for the spirit stone reward.

The higher his cultivation, the greater the demand on spiritual energy. Even with Heaven's Path Divine Art, it would take a long time for Zhang Xuan to achieve a breakthrough just by absorbing spiritual energy from the surroundings. However, if he could obtain sufficient spirit stones, it would be a completely different matter.

"I don't know the details, but going by my traditions, the contestant who takes first place will be awarded a hundred middle-tier spirit stones!" Su Shi contemplated for a moment before replying.

The rules and the prizes for the competition this year hadn't been announced yet, but based on previous occasions, this seemed to be the trend.

"Middle-tier spirit stones?" Zhang Xuan blinked his eyes.

Due to the tier of Tianwu Kingdom being too low, the records of spirit stone here were lacking. Middle-tier... What did that mean?

"The normal spirit stones we use are low-tier. Even though there's plenty of spiritual energy stored within it, it's lacking in purity. Once one's cultivation reaches a certain realm, the quantity of spiritual energy one can absorb from a low-tier spirit stone becomes severely limited."

Even though Su Shi was perplexed, he explained the matter

regarding the spirit stones.

"Compared to low-tier spirit stones, middle-tier spirit stones harness a much larger quantity of purer spiritual energy, making it more suited for one to cultivate with. Usually, a middle-tier spirit stone can be traded for ten thousand low-tier spirit stone. However, most people wouldn't be so foolish as to do so!"

"Ten thousand?" Zhang Xuan nearly threw the teacup in his hands out.

For a single low-tier spirit stone, Zhang Xuan had to employ all of his deception means. Yet, just by winning the championship of the Master Teacher Tournament, he could earn a hundred middle-tier spirit stone, which was equivalent to a million low-tier spirit stones?

Are you for real?

"Yang shi, it can't be that... you don't know about all this?" Seeing the unfathomable Yang shi behaving in such a manner, Su shi and Ling shi glanced at one another doubtfully.

Once one reached Transcendent Mortal realm, it would become difficult for one to cultivate via absorbing spiritual energy from the surroundings. Under such circumstances, spirit stones became a necessity. As such, spirit stones were common knowledge among master teachers above 3-star. Why... did the powerful Yang shi behave as though it was his first time hearing of spirit stones?

"Of course, I know about that! It's just that... I happen to remember some matters of the past!"

Seeing that his agitation nearly did him in, Zhang Xuan looked into the distance with the gaze of one who had seen through the vicissitudes of life.

The more mysterious he seemed, the more unfathomable he would be to the other party.

"Oh!"

As Zhang Xuan expected, upon hearing that Yang shi was reminiscing about his past, Su shi and Ling shi chose not to ask on.

"Then... about Zhang shi participating in the Master Teacher Tournament..." Su shi continued, pushing for an answer about Zhang shi's participation.

"This kind of tournament is a good training ground for youngsters, and I think that it'll be beneficial for him to join. Rest assured, I'll talk him into it!" Zhang Xuan gestured grandly.

Are you joking? That is a million spirit stones...

If he were to miss such an opportunity, he would truly be a fool.

"This..."

Expecting to be rejected, the two master teachers were stunned upon hearing Yang shi agree to the matter so readily.

Yang shi, that isn't how you were acting a moment ago. You were clearly resistant to the idea... Why did you change your mind so quickly?

To think that even experts were so fickle-minded...

"Alright. Yang shi, with your words, we're relieved..."

Even so, at least they had managed to achieve their aim. With this, there would be hope for them to claim a good ranking in this tournament. Su shi and Ling shi clenched their fists tightly in excitement. "Yang shi, we'll have to ask you to tell Zhang shi that he has to reach the Myriad Kingdom Alliance within three months for the tournament..."

"Alright!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

Su shi flicked his wrist, and a token appeared in his hands. "This is the token for the tournament. Yang shi, I'll have to trouble you to pass on it to Zhang shi on my behalf. With this, the apprentices at the Myriad Kingdom Alliance's Master Teacher Pavilion will lead him to me!"

Grabbing it, Zhang Xuan placed the token into his storage ring.

"Since Yang shi has agreed to the matter, we'll take our leave for now and make preparations in advance. We'll be looking forward to Yang shi and Zhang shi's arrival!"

Su shi clasped his fist.

The main reason for the two 4-star master teachers' arrival at Tianwu Kingdom was to look for the genius, Zhang Xuan, and determine whether he was worthy to attend the Master Teacher Tournament. Given that Zhang Xuan had surpassed their expectations, and they had obtained the other party's guarantee on the matter, it could be said that they had accomplished their mission perfectly. Having met their aim, they decided to take their leave.

"Un!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

...

Outside the residence.

Mo Hongyi waited nervously.

He had heard Commander Liang's shouting from the residence a while ago, but at this moment, the entire residence was completely silent. Could they be fighting with one another?

Mo Hongyi clenched his fists tightly. He wanted to charge in to help, but it might be a little too abrupt. He feared that he might

incur the displeasure of the other party if he were to do it, and this could hinder him from acknowledging the other party as his teacher.

"I can only hope that it doesn't blow up..."

Muttering under his breath, just as Mo Hongyi was trying to fathom what was going on inside, the sky above him turned dark, and a gigantic shadow flew across the gates from the residence.

Putong! Putong! Putong!

Shocked, Mo Hongyi immediately backed away. Then, after calming down, he took a closer look and saw a gigantic savage beast and three figures smashing into the pavement not too far away. Their heads were planted in the ground, creating a huge hole in the street.

"That's the princess consort from the Lin Clan?"

Mo Hongyi was taken aback.

Chapter 408: Direct Disciples

Weren't these guys the arrogant fellows from before?

The domineering commander who was standing imposingly on the savage beast before... Why was half of his body stabbed into the ground as though a seedling?

And the main culprit of the entire incident, the princess consort, had her face swollen similar to that of a pig. If not for her elegant clothes, no one would have thought that she was out of place amidst of a group of beggars.

Even that ferocious savage beast seemed to have been knocked insensible from the impact.

This, this...

Mo Hongyi's eyes widened as though huge bells.

What in the world happened? In the blink of an eye, those arrogant fellows were reduced to such a state?

Doubtful, Mo Hongyi heard the sound of another two hitting the ground.

Hurriedly turning his gaze over, he saw two 'patients', flung out from the room on top of the savage beast, crashed onto the

concrete ground in the distance.

They were Lin Ruotian and Lin Lang.

They were already severely injured before, and after being flung several hundred meters away from a height of several dozen meters, all of their bones were shattered. Their souls left their body, heading straight to the underworld to report their attendance.

"Father, brother..."

Upon seeing this sight, Lin Long's blood rushed to her head in agitation, and she fainted.

Even to the moment of his death, Lin Ruotian was indignant.

He thought that he would be able to get back at Zhang Xuan and slaughter those who had dared to humiliate him. Yet, never in his dreams could he have expected that the savage beast would be struck down.

Even so, he was still hopeful. No matter what, Commander Liang was still a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert. Yet, he ended up being flung into the air, and after that... there was no more after.

He came here to exact his vengeance, yet he was done in before he could even meet his sworn enemy...

How could his life end so tragically?

If he knew this would happen, he wouldn't have waited for his daughter. If he had relented earlier, he wouldn't have suffered so many days of humiliation in vain...

"The Lin Clan has truly met their match this time!"

"Indeed! Not only is Zhang Shi talented, he has a good teacher as well. Fighting against him, isn't that no different from committing suicide?"

"To rush over without even trying to investigate the matter clearly, they deserved it..."

Seeing the pathetic state of the group from Xuanyuan Kingdom, not only did no one pity them, everyone even felt exhilarated.

Almost everyone had learned about Lu Chong and the Qu Clan's matter by now. The Lin Clan had oppressed many smaller clans in the capital throughout the years, and their reputation hadn't been great. Now that they had fallen, everyone swiftly turned against them.

"This is the doing of Zhang Shi's teacher?"

"Indeed. Someone in the sentry tower saw the entire situation

previously. He ordered a master teacher named... Little Su or something, I'm not too sure!"

"Regardless of who it is, to be able to throw a Zhizun realm expert around so casually, that person possesses fearsome strength..."

"Indeed. From now on, Zhang shi's residence is a forbidden zone! Whoever dares to barge in will be expelled from the clan!"

...

A commotion broke out in the capital.

"Little Su? You mean that... Su shi was the one who did it?"

Mo Hongyi's face flushed, and he clenched his fists tightly.

As expected of a 4-star master teacher! It was a correct decision to acknowledge one of these two after all. His cultivation would surely soar swiftly in the future.

Jiya!

Just as he walked around the area anxiously for Su shi and Ling shi to come out, he heard the gates opened, and two figures walked out.

"Butler Sun, we'll be leaving now. If you meet Zhang shi, tell him that we'll be waiting for him at the Myriad Kingdom Alliance!"

Su shi clasped his fist.

"Don't worry, it's a small matter!" Sun Qiang waved.

"This..." Mo Hongyi's body swayed from side to side.

That was Su shi and Ling shi, 4-star master teachers of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance! It was one thing for Yang shi to not escort them to the door, but why didn't Zhang shi send them off either?

To have a butler do the job... And more importantly, wasn't this butler being a little too disrespectful?

Look at his expression, he was obviously being perfunctory and... impatient!

Impatient your head! It was one thing if you didn't know Su shi and Ling shi's identities, but they have just shown their incredible strength. How can you still treat them with blatant disregard...

Are you insane, or are you ill?

"Probably not... That Yang shi probably possesses unfathomable means. This is why the butler dares to behave arrogantly as well..."

Mo Hongyi was no fool as well. He soon understood the situation. But then, he fell silent once more.

To be able to induce the fear of a 4-star master teacher... How powerful must this Yang shi be?

...

Back in the Master Teacher Pavilion.

"You said that... teacher addressed Su shi as... Little Su?"

Staring at the report in shock, disbelief flashed across Pavilion Master Jiang's eyes.

"Yes! Not only so, Su shi seems to be exceptionally obedient to Yang shi's words..." Elder Zhu replied.

"Su shi is a 4-star master teacher of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, yet he treated teacher with such respect, not even complaining when he was called Little Su... Could teacher's capability be beyond that of a 4-star master teacher?"

Pavilion Master Jiang knew that Yang shi was no ordinary person, but he couldn't have guessed that he would be such a formidable figure.

To be treated with utmost respect by even a 4-star master teacher, how powerful must he be?

After recovering from his shock, Pavilion Master Jiang commented with a sigh, "Probably only a master teacher of his caliber would be able to groom a talent like Zhang Xuan!"

Despite his young age, Zhang shi had shown incredible talent. Even if he was talented, he would still require a capable teacher to show him the way. In the very least, Jiang Shu felt that he didn't have the ability to groom a student like Zhang Xuan.

"Right, pavilion master. Su shi and Ling shi have left Zhang shi's residence, and they've returned to the Myriad Kingdom Alliance on an aerial savage beast!" Elder Zhu reported.

"Un, Su shi and Ling shi are elders of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance's Master Teacher Pavilion. They must have a lot of matters to handle, so they couldn't possibly stay for too long!"

Pavilion Master Jiang nodded. Then, hesitating for a moment, he said, "Make some preparations, let's meet Zhang shi and his teacher. Most probably, they will be leaving Tianwu Royal City soon as well!"

He knew about Su shi and Ling shi's motive here, and given that they had left, it could only mean that they had achieved their goal.

Since the Master Teacher Tournament was in three months,

Zhang shi would probably be leaving soon.

"That's right!"

Elder Zhu nodded.

Zhang shi was a genius, and a small place like Tianwu Kingdom wasn't sufficient for him to spread his wings. He had to head to somewhere larger for him to soar into the skies!

...

Pavilion Master Jiang and Elder Zhu were right. At this very moment, Zhang Xuan was considering the matter of leaving.

His cultivation had reached Zongshi realm pinnacle, and without sufficient Zhizun realm cultivation techniques, he couldn't achieve a breakthrough.

And it was impossible to find cultivation techniques of that level in Tianwu Kingdom.

Thus, Zhang Xuan had no choice but to head to higher tier kingdoms.

Reverting back to his original appearance, Zhang Xuan walked into the main hall.

At this moment, Zheng Yang and the others were still kneeling. It had been two days since then, and even though their bodies were shaking and threatening to collapse at any moment, their gazes were growing more and more determined. The frivolousness within their eyes had disappeared.

The two days had sharpened their will and determination.

Knowing that his purpose had been met, Zhang Xuan nodded.

"Get up!"

Zhang Xuan gestured before heading to the top seat.

Lu Chong, Zhao Ya, and the others also walked up, and at this moment, all six students of Zhang Xuan were gathered in this area.

"I intend to leave Tianwu Kingdom for the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. If any of you are unwilling to follow me, I won't force you!"

Zhang Xuan spoke calmly as he glanced at the crowd.

It was time for them to make a choice again.

Students weren't slaves. If they weren't willing to follow along with him, it could only mean that their fate as teacher and student had come to an end.

"I'm willing to follow teacher!" Zhao Ya stepped forward.

"I'm the same as well!" Zheng Yang and the others hurriedly spoke up.

Without their teacher, they wouldn't possess the strength they did now. They wanted to follow behind their teacher and rise to greater heights.

"Lu Chong, what about you?"

Soon, his five students from Tianxuan expressed their willingness to pursue Zhang Xuan. Only Lu Chong remained quiet all this while.

"I've already said that my life belongs to teacher. Naturally, I'll follow teacher no matter where you go! However, before that, I have some matters that I have to attend to!" Hesitating for a moment, Lu Chong replied.

"Hm?" Zhang Xuan turned to look at him.

"The Myriad Kingdom Alliance is several hundred thousand kilometers away. Once we leave Tianwu Kingdom, it'll be hard to tell when I'll be able to return. I hope that... before leaving, I can pay respects to my parents and kin first!" Lu Chong said.

"Yes, it's only right for you to pay respect to your parents and kin!" Zhang Xuan replied.

Since there was a long journey ahead of them, it was understandable for Lu Chong to want to pay final respects to his family before leaving.

"Also... I would like to ask teacher to help me claim the object that my ancestor left behind. My current strength... is still insufficient!" Lu Chong said.

Zhang Xuan nodded.

The object Lu Chong was referring to probably referred to the letter with Kong shi's personal handwriting on it.

This item was useless to Zhang Xuan, but this was an heirloom from Lu Chong's ancestors. It wasn't surprising that Lu Chong would want to retrieve it before leaving.

"Thank you, teacher!"

Gratitude filled Lu Chong's eyes.

"Since you have decided to follow me, I'll lay down my ground rules first!"

Since everyone had agreed to it, Zhang Xuan scanned the

surroundings, and a stern expression appeared on his face.

"The relationship between a teacher and a student hinges on fate. In an academy, you are free to leave a classroom and change your teacher as you please. However, since you have decided to follow me, I won't allow for that."

In a normal teacher and student relationship, even though the students were still expected to respect their teacher, the relationship wasn't binding.

Taking Lu Chong's class for example, even though Bai laoshi, their previous teacher, had taught them for a considerable period of time, the students didn't feel any guilt acknowledging Liu laoshi as their new teacher.

It was the same in Hongtian Academy as well. If the student felt that a teacher's education ability was subpar, they could withdraw and change teachers as they please.

"Teacher... are you taking us in as your direct disciples?"

Suddenly, realization struck, and Zheng Yang asked in agitation.

Zhao Ya and the others also clenched their fists tightly.

There was also a hierarchy to students as well; direct disciple, normal students, and listening in. There was a huge disparity in standing among them.

A normal student could change their teacher as they please. However, if a direct disciple were to do this, it would be equivalent to betraying his teacher and his heritage. He wouldn't be able to complain even if those from the same line killed him.

Direct disciples were entitled to the secret arts of their teacher, as well as the most detailed guidance. At the same time, their standing was also superior to the other students.

But in return, they had to remain loyal to their teacher.

At the same time, becoming a direct disciple was an acknowledgement from a teacher to a student. After all, no one would impart their ultimate techniques to someone they didn't acknowledge.

Even though Zhao Ya and the others had regarded themselves as Zhang laoshi's direct disciples, the latter had never brought up the topic, and they'd felt a little disappointed over the matter. Thus, upon hearing this matter, they couldn't hold back their excitement.

Becoming a direct disciple meant officializing their identities!

In the future, they would be able to stand upright when speaking up for their teacher.

"That's right. However, if you become my direct disciple, you

have to follow some of my rules: You must respect me and follow my instructions; you are not to be defiant.

"Without my permission, you are not to pass down the skills I impart you all.

"You must treat others magnanimously, and you mustn't bully the weak.

"Honesty is the basis of trust. You mustn't hide anything from me.

"Unity is of key...

"If you feel that you can follow all of these rules, I'll take you in as my direct disciple. If you were to infringe of any of these, I, Zhang Xuan, will kill you personally!"

Placing his hands behind his back, Zhang Xuan stood up and spoke sternly. At the very end, it felt as though the air in the room had frozen.

Even though his students might seem frivolous, they held utmost respect for him in their hearts. Zhang Xuan felt that this was what he was looking for in a direct disciple.

But even so, he had to make some things clear beforehand.

"We are willing to come under Zhang laoshi's lineage to become Zhang laoshi's direct disciple. We'll follow teacher's orders obediently and remain loyal to you until our deaths!"

Without any hesitation, Zhao Ya and the others kneeled to the floor.

"Good!"

Zhang Xuan nodded. "From now on, Zhao Ya will be your senior while Wang Ying is ranked second, followed by Liu Yang, Zheng Yang, Yuan Tao, then Lu Chong. The six of you are to get along harmoniously, and I bar any internal conflicts among you all!"

Even though Wang Ying was the first student Zhang Xuan accepted, she had a weak character. Of the group, only Zhao Ya possessed the insight and cultivation to take on the role of the leader. If Zheng Yang and the others were to lead the group, who knows what kind of trouble they would cause.

"Yes!"

The group nodded.

With this, the ceremony ended.

...

Autumn of the Year 1736, in Tianwu Royal City, Zhao Ya, Zheng Yang, Liu Yang, Wang Ying, Yuan Tao, and Lu Chong became Zhang shi's direct disciples.

Chapter 409: The Crown Prince's Decision

Translator: StarveCleric Editor: StarveCleric

"Your Highness, you must redress my grievance! Kill that fellow to avenge me!"

In a sealed room, a woman whose entire face was swollen knelt on the floor as she screeched.

It was Princess Consort Lin Long, who had been subjected to a violent beating several days ago.

She had applied some medicine, and her pain had alleviated. However, the swelling had yet to calm down, and her appearance was still hideous.

Seated in front of her was a young man of around thirty-four-year-old. His face was distinctly shaped and, from the occasional authoritative disposition which leaked out of him, one could tell that he was a person of high standing.

He was the crown prince of Xuanyuan Kingdom, Ding Mu!

"Avenge?"

Pah!

Ding Mu's face turned scarlet as he kicked the body of the other party. His body trembled lightly in rage as he bellowed, "Do you know who you offended? How dare you ask me to avenge you?"

When Lin Long left the Eastern Palace, Ding Mu happened to be out. After receiving the news, he immediately rushed back to the Palace to see what was going on. However, he was still too late.

After learning that his wife had been beaten to a tragic state, he immediately sent his men to look into it, and he was nearly scared out of his wits.

A genius who broke innumerable records, and on top of that, he had an unfathomable teacher...

Of all the people your Lin Clan could offend, why in the world did you have to offend such a powerful figure!

Avenge? How in the world do I avenge you?

Not many people knew about Su shi and Ling shi's arrival at Tianwu Kingdom, and even official master teachers weren't able to dig out the matter easily. But even so, the fact that Liang Qingming wasn't a match for the other party was an issue.

Given how the other party was capable of rendering a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert and the Gold-scaled Lightning Beast helpless with just a harrumph, even if the entire Xuanyuan Kingdom were to come together, it wouldn't be a match for him!

If I were to try to avenge you, won't the entire kingdom be doomed?

You must be joking!

"Of course I know who he is, a 2-star master teacher from the Master Teacher Pavilion who has a master who seems to be a 4-star master teacher!" Kicked by Ding Mu, Lin Long didn't panic. Instead, she sneered coldly.

Naturally, she also ordered her men to look into the matter.

"Since you know, then what are you spouting nonsense for? To become a 4-star master teacher, one has to be at minimum Transcendent Mortal realm. That kind of expert is a powerful figure even within the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, needless to say Xuanyuan Kingdom. He isn't someone that you or I can offend!"

Waving grandly, Ding Mu had finally decided. "Alright, let's forget about this matter. Don't ever bring it up again!"

"Don't make up your mind so quickly!"

Lin Long stood up. "Your Highness, do you know the reason behind the grudge between my Lin Clan and Zhang Xuan?"

"Isn't it because you slaughtered the other party's clan?" Ding Mu

frowned.

"That's right, but do you know why I did that?" A bizarre smile crept on Lin Long's face.

Ding Mu frowned.

Regarding this matter, he had no idea at all.

Rumor had it that it was because of the conflict between Qu Chong's elder sister and Lin Lang. However, from the looks of it now, the matter wasn't that simple.

Lin Long was a person who was extremely protective of her family, but she wasn't someone who couldn't see the bigger picture. Otherwise, no matter how infatuated he was in her, Ding Mu would have never allowed her to become his wife.

She was usually a composed person, and it was indeed bizarre for her to slaughter an entire clan outright despite knowing the various implications it could bring.

Could there be some hidden secret about the matter?

Ding Mu's curiosity was piqued, and he turned toward Lin Long with a gaze inviting her to continue on.

"Your Highness, I know that you wish to enter the Fleeting Cloud

Sect, and I've been keeping that in mind... Actually, the key to doing so lies with Qu Chong!" Lin Long harrumphed.

"Oh?" Ding Mu glanced at Lin Long.

Even though Xuanyuan Kingdom was a vassal to the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, the strongest influence in the surroundings was, without a doubt, this Fleeting Cloud Sect!

In the past 77 Master Teacher Tournament, it had won the championship thirty-six times. From this, it could be seen how powerful it was.

On the other hand, the best result the Myriad Kingdom Alliance had produced was only in the 23rd place, fifth from the bottom.

Ding Mu was the crown prince of Xuanyuan Kingdom, and he would eventually inherit the throne. However, his ambitions didn't just stop here. He had only thought of Xuanyuan Kingdom as his stepping stone, and his eyes were set on the wider world outside. His current aim was to be a disciple of the Fleeting Cloud Sect, but he had been unable to find a suitable opportunity to become one!

Once he succeeds and receives the best grooming resources, his cultivation would surely soar, and becoming a Transcendent Mortal, or even reaching greater heights, wouldn't just be a dream.

Just that, the Fleeting Cloud Sect was a powerful organization

with high bars, and joining it was no easy feat. On top of that, Ding Mu was the crown prince of a neighboring influence. Thus, without the recommendation of an insider, it was practically impossible.

"That Qu Clan may seem like an unimpressive and shabby clan now, but several ten thousand years ago, it was an extremely formidable clan! Their ancestors even unintentionally saved the life of Sage Min!" Lin Long said.

"Sage Min? You mean... one of the 72 Sages under Kong shi... Min shi?" Narrowing his eyes, Ding Mu's breathing hastened.

Kong shi had three thousand known disciples, and of them, the most formidable ones were known as the 72 Sages. They had participated in the creation of the Master Teacher Pavilion, and they were each considered as one of its founders.

Unintentionally saved his life?

Wasn't this Qu Clan impressive then?

"Indeed! Precisely due to this, they received a letter with Kong shi's handwritten reply on it. They took it as their family heirloom, and they passed it down from generation to generation."

Glancing at Ding Mu, Lin Long continued, "Even if it's just a single word, the value of handwritten words from Kong shi is unimaginable. I believe Your Highness should understand it even

if I don't say too much about it! If you can obtain this and hand it over to the master of Fleeting Cloud Sect, becoming an inner disciple wouldn't be a problem. In fact, it shouldn't be a problem for you to become a direct disciple, or even take on the role of an elder!"

"This..."

Ding Mu's body trembled in agitation.

Kong shi, the world's teacher.

The number one expert in history.

Contained within his handwritten words were the laws of the world, and his students had already taken all of them for themselves. Such treasures would never reach the outside world.

Even a 6-star master teacher would happily accept a person as his student if the other party were to present Kong shi's personal handwriting to him...

It was simply too valuable!

Putting aside the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, even the twenty-six other influences in the region might not even have one of such treasure... Yet, to think that the Qu Clan would possess it!

This...

Ding Mu's breathing hastened, and he felt his tongue go dry.

"Since you made a move on the Qu Clan two years ago, you should have eradicated all traces of them. Why did you intentionally leave a remnant running about?"

Lin Long harrumphed coldly, "That fellow thought that just because he changed his name to Lu Chong and hid in the Tianwu Academy, we wouldn't be able to find him. What a joke! Our Lin Clan has the Seeking Mouse; even if he were to don on a full disguise, we'd still be able to find him easily!"

Lu Chong had been holing himself up in Tianwu Academy, rarely heading to the streets to avoid any attention. He thought that by doing so, the Lin Clan wouldn't notice him. Yet, it turned out that the Lin Clan had already grasped his whereabouts, just that they chose not to make a move.

After all, even if the Lin Clan were to lose track of Lu Chong, the Seeking Mouse was more than capable of tracking him down.

The Lin Clan would have dominated the Tianwu Royal City in vain if it couldn't even track down a Pigu realm teenager.

"The members of the Qu Clan are obstinate, and no matter how we questioned them, we were unable to locate the whereabouts of that object. Thus, we intentionally left one alive to bring us to it."

A savage glint flashed across Lin Long's eyes as she said, "Yet, that fellow sure was patient. For the past two years, he didn't do anything at all. Initially, we were planning on capturing him for interrogation, but before we could make a move, that fellow managed to find himself a good teacher who was willing to stand up for him..."

At this point, Lin Long clenched her fists tightly, and resentment scrunched her face.

Even though she had married into the Xuanyuan Kingdom, and she rarely returned back to her maternal family, she had been keeping an eye on the matter there.

It was due to the importance of the letter that Lin Long even went to the extent of building the expensive Communication Wall in the Lin Clan to make it convenient for them to exchange messages. Who would have that this wall wouldn't send her news of the handwritten letter, but of the destruction of the Lin Clan.

"A good teacher? I doubt so! Most probably, that Zhang Xuan knew about Kong shi's handwritten reply in advance. Otherwise, there is no reason for a Zongshi realm pinnacle 2-star master teacher to go all out for a student, offending the powerful Lin Clan and Xuanyuan Kingdom," Liang Qingming interjected by the side.

He was a confidant of the crown prince, and as such, the crown prince didn't bother hiding such secrets from him.

"That's right, that must be the reason. Otherwise, even with Yang shi as his backing, there's no reason for him to offend the Lin Clan for no reason and disregard the authority of Xuanyuan Kingdom!" Lin Long screeched.

If not for this, she truly couldn't understand why a 2-star master teacher, who had such a bright future ahead of him, would go through all of this trouble for a student he had just met a few days ago, going to the extent of waging war with the Lin Clan, and beating her up, the princess consort of Xuanyuan Kingdom.

"Alright, the important matter at hand isn't Zhang Xuan's motive!"

Ding Mu raised his hand to halt the vehement discussion of the two. His eyes reddened slightly in greed as he said, "It would be worth offending even the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance for Kong shi's handwritten reply, needless to say a 2-star master teacher. If your words are true, then this risk would be worthwhile to take!"

The Myriad Kingdom Alliance was powerful, but compared to the twenty-six other powers in the surroundings, it was ranked at the very last.

As long as he laid his hands on the handwritten reply, he would be able to win the Fleeting Cloud Sect over to his side. Even if he had to offend the Myriad Kingdom Alliance in the midst of doing so, it would still be a huge gain.

"That's right, Your Highness. You must make your decision quickly. I've already sent someone to look into the matter, and Zhang Xuan seems to be leaving Tianwu Royal City. He has already bid the personnel of the Master Teacher Pavilion farewell, and just this morning, he was seen heading for Tianwu Mountain Range. The Myriad Kingdom Alliance is in the south, yet he headed for the southwest. If I'm not wrong, he must be looking for this letter. It'll be hard for us to lay our hands on the letter once they obtain it and bring it to the alliance!" Lin Long hurriedly said.

Previously, she only acted rashly due to the rage from seeing the tragic state her father and younger brother were in. After being pummeled by Lu Chong, she woke up, and she made many preparations in advance.

"It's indeed impossible to lay our hands on it once it's delivered to the alliance, but..." Ding Mu frowned, "He has his teacher and the two elders beside him..."

Ding Mu wasn't worried about Zhang Xuan, but his teacher and the 'Little Su', who wounded Liang Qingming, were huge problems.

With Transcendent Mortal experts accompanying him, he would be dead before he could close in on Zhang Xuan.

"Don't worry, Your Highness. Little Su and the other elder have already left yesterday and, when Zhang Xuan left this morning, Yang Shi didn't tag along with him. He only brought his students and some retainers along with him!" Lin Long replied.

Su shi and Ling shi didn't intentionally hide their departure, so it wasn't hard to look into the matter.

This morning, Zhang Xuan and his group left on the Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast, and Pavilion Master Jiang sent him off personally. Lin Long's spies were among the crowd who saw him off, and none of them saw Yang shi.

"He didn't tag along? Great... There are many savage beasts in Tianwu Mountain Range, and there are many experts under Zhizun realm who have died there. As long as we settle this matter properly... No one will be able to trace the matter back to me!"

Ding Mu stood up, and a callous glint flashed across his eyes.

"It's decided then. Kill him!"

This is how sects usually operate in most Chinese novels.

Outer (Normal) disciples: They are in charge of menial labor, but the sect provides them with some, although limited, resources for cultivation.

Inner disciples: This is where the more talented disciples are placed. They have a higher standing than outer disciples, and they

don't have to do menial labor. The resources they are granted are significantly higher than that of outer disciples.

Direct disciple: As long as a disciple catches the eye of an elder or sect leader, they could be accepted as their direct disciple. Direct disciples usually have higher standing than inner disciples due to the backing of their master, and their master would also impart their secret arts to them.

After that, disciples can be promoted to take on various roles of the sect.

Chapter 410: Finding the Old Residence

"Why are you here?"

Seeing the lady before him, Zhang Xuan fell speechless.

After accepting Zhao Ya and the others as his direct disciples, Zhang Xuan had finished dealing with all of the miscellaneous matters in Tianwu Kingdom. Thus, he summoned the Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast and left immediately.

Knowing the limits of their capabilities, Liu shi and Lu Xun chose to remain in Tianwu Kingdom. The Myriad Kingdom Alliance was filled with innumerable experts, and they had no backing there. On the other hand, they had the protection of the royal family and the Master Teacher Pavilion here in Tianwu Kingdom. Thus, they took the initiative to stay.

Only Sun Qiang insisted on following Yang shi. Thus, Zhang Xuan took him along with him.

It was exactly ten days since Zhang Xuan had arrived in Tianwu Kingdom. His cultivation had risen from Tongxuan realm pinnacle to Zongshi realm pinnacle, and his physical body possessed the might nearly equivalent to a Zhizun realm primary stage expert.

He also gained a new student, Lu Chong.

As for his occupations, he passed the 2-star master teacher

examination, and his 3-star painter emblem just arrived last night.

Due to his lacking cultivation, the Apothecary Guild and Physician Guild had yet to allocate him his 3-star emblems.

Thus, his current occupations were as such: 2-star master teacher, 3-star apothecary, 3-star physician, 3-star painter, 2-star beast tamer.

His stop at Tianwu Kingdom had been rather fruitful.

In just ten days, Zhang Xuan achieved what others might never have been able to do even if they dedicated their entire lives to it.

"I would also like to visit the Myriad Kingdom Alliance to watch the Master Teacher Tournament. It can't be that you wish to dump me here?" Mo Yu stared at the youngster before her furiously.

What the heck!

Even if we can't progress any further, surely we can remain as friends!

How can you leave for Myriad Kingdom Alliance without bidding me farewell?

Do you consider yourself a buddy?

It is fortunate that I have made preparations in advance and immediately rode the Viridescent Eagle after you. Otherwise, I would have surely missed you.

As a master teacher and the princess of Tianwu Kingdom, it wasn't too difficult for Mo Yu to look into the matter of Su shi and Ling shi, as well as the Master Teacher Tournament.

"Alright, I'll bring you along..."

Zhang Xuan gave up.

In any case, there was sufficient space on the back of the Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast. It wasn't cramped even with his six students, Sun Qiang, and Mo Yu.

He couldn't be bothered with the infuriated Mo Yu, so Zhang Xuan stood by the window and gazed outward. White clouds overlapped one another, reminiscent of a boundless field of snow. In the midst between clouds, he could catch a glimpse of lush mountains. It felt rejuvenating.

"Teacher..."

Lu Chong walked over to Zhang Xuan and said, "In order to prevent the unfilial descendants of the Qu Clan from handing the letter over to the hands of others, they took precautions by hiding it in an old residence on the Tianwu Mountain Range. I only happened to hear my father bring the matter up. I roughly know

the location, but I'm not too sure of the exact spot."

"It's alright, we can slowly look for it later on!"

Lu Chong's clan had given up their life to guard this heirloom. It was best if they could find it.

"Teacher, it's around this area!"

Half a day later, Lu Chong pointed.

"The area is huge; how can we find it like that?"

Leaping off the back of the Howling Firmament Beast, Zhao Ya glanced at the surroundings and sighed.

What stood before them was a gigantic mountain valley. The terrain was bumpy, and towering trees filled the area. Putting aside finding an old residence, they couldn't even see too far ahead of them.

More importantly, there were many savage beasts in the area. If they were to accidentally barge into a savage beasts' nest, they would die indignantly.

"I'm... not too sure either!"

Lu Chong scratched his head awkwardly.

He had heard the elders of his family speaking about the rough geographical terrain, but he hadn't been here before, so he wasn't too sure.

"To find an old residence on such a vast mountain range... Even a year wouldn't be sufficient!"

Mo Yu shook her head.

She knew that Lu Chong wanted to look for an item before heading to the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, but she didn't know what it was.

However, the area before them was simply too large.

The vast mountain range was filled with plants, and on top of that, the old residence was likely to be hidden by a formation... How could they find it under such overwhelmingly unlikely odds?

"Teacher..."

After taking a look around, the crowd eventually gave up. Thus, all eyes gathered on Zhang Xuan.

"This..."

Zhang Xuan shook his head. "There's no use asking me, I've never been to the Qu Clan's old residence before..."

Halfway through his words, Zhang Xuan's eyes suddenly lit up, and he said, "Wait, I just thought of a good idea!"

"You have an idea?"

Everyone froze for a moment before turning to look at Zhang Xuan with glowing eyes.

Mo Yu was also curious.

Even Lu Chong himself didn't know where the old residence was, so what kind of idea could Zhang Xuan come up with?

Just as they were perplexed, the young man before them took out an empty book, and he drew an arrow and scribbled a few words on it. Then, slowly rotating on the spot, he mumbled, "The Lu Clan's old residence is in this direction... this direction... this direction..."

"..."

Mo Yu, Zhao Ya, and the others were staggered.

They thought that Zhang Xuan would come up with some brilliant means, but upon seeing this sight, they nearly fainted on

the spot.

Taking out a book to draw an arrow to confirm the direction? And you still dare to say that your idea is good... Where did your confidence come from?

If you wish to fool us, you should at least do it better! Aren't you being too perfunctory?

"Alright, this direction!"

After spinning an entire circle, Zhang Xuan confirmed the direction and pointed forward.

"..." Mo Yu staggered once more.

Sometimes, it seemed like this Zhang shi possessed unparalleled talent; at other times, he felt so ridiculous that it made one want to smack his head.

"You... are you sure that this method is feasible?" Mo Yu asked, unable to hold back her doubts.

"Of course!" Zhang Xuan nodded seriously. "The method I use involves a complex calculation of the position of the stars, the mountains, and the rivers, and along with a profound comprehension of the universe, I am able to even locate treasures, needless to say, determine a direction!"

The Library of Heaven's Path could determine right from wrong. As long as the direction he was pointing to reflected no flaws, it would mean that it was the correct direction.

However, there was no way Zhang Xuan could explain this.

"Position of the stars, the mountains, and the rivers?"

"Profound comprehension of the universe?"

The group stared at one another.

Grabbing a book, scribbling an arrow and a few words, rotating on the spot, and you tell me that it involves all of that? Can you come up with anything more nonsensical than that?

"Forget it. Since we can't find the direction either, we might as well listen to his words!"

Mo Yu felt constipated.

Why did she have to follow this fellow? She deeply suspected that at this rate, they might get lost forever in this forest.

Thus, after Zhang Xuan reached the end of a path that he determined, or that there were new splits in the path before them, Zhang Xuan would take his book out and rotate on the spot. Two

hours later, they arrived at a col.

"This is it!"

Zhang Xuan pointed forward.

Glancing over, everyone was taken aback.

Amidst the greenery, they saw the roof of several rock residences. However, they looked slightly blurred, as though they were hidden in some formation.

"This must be the location! It's exactly the same as my father's description..."

Lu Chong's eyes lit up in anticipation.

"This..."

Upon hearing Lu Chong's confirmation, everyone's eyes widened, and their gazes hurriedly shot toward Zhang Xuan. They were on the verge of going insane.

Even Lu Chong, the person-in-question, couldn't find the direction. Yet, just by scribbling on a book and rotating on the spot... They all thought that Zhang Xuan was fooling about, but to think that it would actually work!

Could they have truly misunderstood him?

Did it really involve what stars, mountains, and rivers?

Otherwise, how did he manage to find the location?

Thinking back on it now, ever since the other party took out the book and turned around with it, the location they trod on had been straight, and they didn't stumble by any savage beast's nest along the way, despite the odds. Even if one were to know the way beforehand, surely it was impossible to maneuver so precisely?

More importantly, the location they were standing on happened to be the eye of the formation. It was due to them standing here that they were able to see the rock residences. If it was anywhere else, their sight would have been blocked by the formation.

In other words, if they didn't know the location beforehand, they would have been fooled by the formation and walk by it.

Despite not knowing where it was, Zhang Xuan was able to determine the precise location of the old residence...

How in the world... did this fellow do it?

"Forget it, he isn't human..."

Unable to make sense of this situation, Mo Yu could only shake

her head with a bitter smile.

Ever since she'd met this fellow, he had been amazing her with all kinds of unimaginable means. There were too many things to him that couldn't be comprehended with common sense.

If she really tried to rationalize it all, she would probably die of exhaustion first.

"Let's go in!"

Ignoring the dazed crowd, Zhang Xuan walked straight toward the col.

"Teacher, wait a moment. This formation is extremely dangerous!"

Lu Chong hurried forward to stop Zhang Xuan, "According to my father, only the blood of a Qu Clan descendant can stop the formation..."

"The blood of a Qu Clan descendant?"

Zhang Xuan glanced at Lu Chong.

"Un. If I'm not wrong, I have to drip a droplet of my blood on the formation-controlling rock for a path for us to appear. Without this formation protecting the old residence, the area would have

long been scavenged by humans or savage beasts!" Lu Chong explained.

Coming to a realization, Mo Yu and the others nodded.

Given that the old residence was still able to retain its original appearance despite the innumerable years since it was abandoned, the formation truly possessed incredible might.

So far, it seemed to be effective in warding away humans and savage beasts.

If one were to abruptly step into such a formidable formation, huge trouble might ensue.

"Then, give it a try!" Mo Yu urged.

Without wasting a word, Lu Chong looked around the area and a troubled look flashed on his face.

His father had told him that he had to drip a droplet of his blood on the formation-controlling rock for it to stop, but... which of these innumerable rocks was it?

The entire col was filled with at least a thousand bizarre rocks. If he were to drip a droplet of blood on every single one of them, he would probably die of anemia before the formation stopped.

"That... Teacher, I can't find the formation-controlling rock..."

A moment later, Lu Chong returned with a sheepish look.

His elder sister was a genius formation master, but he wasn't.

There were many secret manuals on formations in his clan, but he didn't like reading them, and he never did. In the end, when he visited the old residence of his ancestors, he wasn't even able to find the formation-controlling rock at all...

"You can't find it?"

Zhang Xuan was taken aback. He briefly looked around the surroundings before pinching his glabella, "I can't find it either..."

Even though he had taken in quite a sizeable sum of books on formation, this formation was clearly above grade-3, beyond the level of Tianwu Kingdom

With his current knowledge on formations, it was difficult for him to find it as well.

Eventually, Zhang Xuan shook his head.

"Forget it, let's not bother finding the formation-controlling rock..."

Lu Chong was taken aback. "Then... how do we enter?"

"Simple..."

Zhang Xuan stepped forward.

Weng!

As soon as he stepped into the formation, it started shaking vigorously. Then, lifting his foot, he kicked straight at a certain point.

Hu!

The formation stopped.

Zhang Xuan waved his hands casually, "Alright, we can enter now!"

"..." Lu Chong, Mo Yu, and the others.

Chapter 411: He Is My Teacher

The difference of a sub-grade in a formation could easily mean a difference in might by twofold, and the difficulty in finding its core would increase exponentially.

Everyone thought that Zhang Shi was already formidable to stop a grade-3 primary formation with a single kick, but upon seeing this sight, they finally realized...

Grade-2, grade-3, grade-4, these numbers meant nothing to him!

As long as he was around, even the most formidable formations would be destroyed with a single kick.

Lu Chong's mouth twitched violently, and he shook his head vigorously, as though trying to wake himself up from a dream.

His father had once told him that this formation was unimaginably formidable. His ancestors had reinforced it again and again over the countless generations, and profound wisdom was harnessed within it... But from the looks of it now, wisdom my head! Before his teacher, all of this meant nothing at all.

Since the formation had stopped, the crowd immediately walked toward the rock residences.

It was clear that there was a long history to those few simple rock residences. Even though there were descendants who came from

time to time to fix it, it was still severely damaged by wear and tear.

"Go on!"

Zhang Xuan stopped before the rock residences.

This was an object that Lu Chong's ancestor had left for him. Zhang Xuan's role was only to accompany him; since there was no more danger now, it didn't matter whether he tagged behind Lu Chong or not.

"Yes, teacher!"

Lu Chong nodded and walked in with reddened eyes.

Back then, when his parents and kin were killed, he didn't have the time to collect their bones before escaping. Thus, he created several tablets for them yesterday to place alongside the ancestors. In a way, this was fulfilling the final regret he had regarding his clan.

"Things rarely go the way we want. Let's go!"

Understanding the other party's emotions, Zhang Xuan sighed.

"Teacher!"

Lu Chong stepped forward and proffered a letter to Zhang Xuan.

It was a simple, ancient bamboo scroll, and its worn-out exterior betrayed its age. Even so, it seemed to be crafted using some kind of unique method, making it extremely resilient.

Knowing that this was the letter which Kong shi's personal handwriting was on, Zhang Xuan took it and opened it.

Honestly speaking, Zhang Xuan also felt curious toward the world's teacher, Kong shi. Even though he wouldn't stoop down to taking his student's possession for his own, it shouldn't be much of a problem for him to peer into the contents.

Unrolling the scroll, an ancient aura immediately unfurled from within.

The handwriting for the former half was simple, it wasn't particularly astounding. But, even though the latter half only consisted on several words, the imposing aura it exuded felt as though a massive mountain was weighing on one.

The content was simple, and it was indeed an ordinary letter. Most probably, Lu Chong's ancestor sent the letter, and in an attempt to return the favor, Sage Min requested for his teacher to write a few words before sending it back.

Looking at the personal handwriting of Kong shi, Zhang Xuan felt a grand aura gushing into his head. All of a sudden, he reached

the state of Heart of Tranquil Water, and fell into a trance.

Soul Tempering of a Mentor's Calligraphy!

Rumors had it that there were some formidable master teachers who were able to harness their spirit and their understanding of the universe into their calligraphy, and looking at it frequently was helpful in raising one's Soul Depth. This was also known as Soul Tempering of a Mentor's Calligraphy.

However, this kind of tempering required a harmonization in spirit. Unless one was in a teacher-student relationship or a blood-related kin of the calligrapher, the chances of this phenomenon occurring were nearly zero. Out of ten thousand people, it might not even activate once.

Zhang Xuan and Kong shi weren't in a teacher-student relationship, and they weren't blood-related either. Yet, for it to be activated instantly, Zhang Xuan's luck was truly astounding.

Boom!

Holding the letter, Zhang Xuan felt his Will of Mind stabilizing, and his Soul Depth slowly rose.

It was as though he had fallen into some unique state, and he stood in a daze.

...

"Your Highness, it seems like they have obtained the letter!"

Behind a giant boulder above the col, Liang Qingming clasped his fist and reported.

After deciding to take the letter for themselves, Ding Mu, Lin Long, and the others had immediately rushed over.

The one they were going to strike down was a talented 2-star master teacher, and if they were found out, they would be in danger. However, as long as they succeeded, the returns would be immense.

"As the student of a suspected 4-star master teacher, Zhang Xuan would surely have many life-preserving means on him. Thus, we've got to kill him in a single shot! We mustn't give him any opportunity to strike back. Otherwise, once he sends a rescue signal or activates one of his trump cards, it would be difficult for us to kill him anymore!"

Ding Mu instructed with a grim expression. "But of course, our priority is to obtain that letter."

Since Yang shi was willing to let Zhang Xuan venture out alone, he must have entrusted several life-saving tools to him. Thus, they had to strike swift and deadly.

"Your Highness, don't worry!" Liang Qingming nodded.

"Go!"

Ding Mu nodded gravely.

If he chose to simply steal the letter, there was a high chance he would be exposed. By then, if Yang shi decided to stand up for his student, the entire Xuanyuan Kingdom might be destroyed.

On the other hand, if he were to kill Zhang Xuan, he could create a facade of him being killed by savage beasts. By the time Yang shi truly tracked them down, he would have already found a backing in the Fleeting Cloud Sect through the letter, and there would be nothing for him to worry about.

The Master Teacher Pavilions might be under the same headquarters, but there was still rivalry among the various powers.

Using an analogy, it was just like the feudal system. Although the governors were all under the royal court, there were still some rivalry and feuds among the various territories.

Regarding the rivalry among the Master Teacher Pavilions, as long as they didn't commit immoral acts, the headquarters wouldn't interfere.

Competition induced advancement, and only with a suitable amount of competition would humans reach greater heights. As

such, the Master Teacher Pavilion pushed for such rivalries as well.

"Yes!"

Hearing his order, Liang Qingming drove the zhenqi in his body, and with a flick of his wrist, a sharp sword appeared in his hands.

Huala!

In a flash, he leaped out from the boulder, and as swift as a flash of lightning, his sword headed straight toward Zhang Xuan.

Pushing the might of a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert to the brim, in the blink of an eye, he covered the distance of several hundred meters between them.

The formation had been stopped, and there was no other defensive mechanism in the col. As such, there was nothing to stop Liang Qingming's charge.

Zhang Xuan was currently in a trance from the Soul Tempering of a Mentor's Calligraphy, so he didn't notice the other party approaching.

Even more so, Mo Yu, Lu Chong, and the others didn't think that someone would assault them in such a remote area.

Upon seeing the brilliant gleam of the sword and hearing a sonic boom, everyone's eyes narrowed, and their faces immediately warped in shock upon seeing Liang Qingming.

"Teacher!"

"Zhang Xuan!"

"Young master!"

Loud bellows reverberated in the col, and everyone's body trembled in astonishment.

"Teacher, careful!"

At the current moment, the one standing the closest to Zhang Xuan was Lu Chong. Upon seeing the brilliant gleam from the sword, he could tell that the other party would surely die if the sword were to strike him, and the thought of it sent him into a panic.

To avenge him, his teacher confronted the Lin Clan alone without a word of complaint. To raise his cultivation, his teacher was willing to pay a huge price, yet didn't expect anything in return...

Imparting battle techniques and explaining cultivation techniques!

Lecturing the basic principles a human should have, and deciphering the essence of cultivation!

All of these, he did on his initiative, even going far beyond what that was expected of him!

Without his teacher, he would remain an average cultivator for his entire life, doomed to never be able to exact vengeance.

Without his teacher, it was just a matter of time before the Lin Clan found him and silenced him.

It was teacher who brought him out of his sinkhole and gave him the dignity to face his dead kin...

This was the man who he respected and admired.

He couldn't allow anything to happen to him!

"If you were to cultivate on like that, you won't even reach Pixue realm in ten years. At this rate, you will be dead before you can... exact your vengeance!"

"You don't have to bother how I know of it! Your vengeance is both a motivation as well as a hindrance to your cultivation. You are suppressing your worries too deep within, and it has suppressed your cultivation, making it difficult for you to achieve a

breakthrough. I know that the reason why you refuse to speak is because you're afraid that you might accidentally speak of your enemy's name and make them aware of your existence."

"Don't worry, as long as you believe in me, I promise you that you will be able to exact your vengeance within ten days!"

"It's your choice to choose whether you want to believe me or not! However... you'll only get this one chance!"

"Pardon me, but I happen to know the assassin you speak of. He's my student, and I... am his teacher!"

...

Boom!

His encounters with Zhang laoshi flowed through his head, and his words resounded in his mind. All of a sudden, his entire body moved on its own accord. In the blink of an eye, he had already leaped several meters away, standing right before Zhang Xuan.

Puhe!

Liang Qingming's sword also happened to reach at this very instant. It stabbed into his chest, and the zhenqi of a Zhizun realm expert gushed into the other party's body through the sword, frenziedly wrecking his physical functions.

"AH!"

Sensing the other party's sword qi ravaging through his body, threatening to tear his entire body apart at any moment, Lu Chong bellowed furiously. His hands stretched forward and grabbed the other party's sword firmly.

"You..."

Not expecting his sure-kill technique to be blocked by this fellow, Liang Qingming's face darkened. He was just about to pull out his sword and strike Zhang Xuan, but he realized that the other party was holding onto his sword firmly as though a sword stuck in a boulder. No matter how hard he tugged on it, it refused to move at all.

"Let go..."

He couldn't have imagined that a Zongshi realm fellow would have blocked his attack. Liang Qingming was furious and anxious. Roaring furiously, he drove his zhenqi into the other party's body, intending to kill him before striking down Zhang Xuan.

"I won't allow you to hurt him because..."

Lu Chong felt his life force slowly dissipating under the furious surge from the other party's zhenqi, but he didn't regret his actions at all. Instead, he stared at Liang Qingming with unwavering

determination.

"... he's my teacher!"

Author's Notes:

The fourth arc, [He is my Teacher], has to an end. The next arc, [Invincible], will unfold from next chapter onward. In 'He is my Teacher', I hoped to highlight the mutual respect and deep relationship between a teacher and his students, and fortunately, it went as I planned.

Due to my personal reasons, family issues, and my work, there are some parts that I'm not too satisfied, but overall, I think I still brought out the main idea that I wished to express. Because I am a teacher myself as well, I can relate much more to this. Being a teacher shouldn't be only about constantly giving, and being a student shouldn't only be about constantly accepting as well. The relationship should be built on mutual respect, trust, and consideration, and only through such can the relationship run deep.

As for Lu Chong, as shown by the name of the arc, is destined to become the final sacrifice for the climax. But of course, there's no need to worry. This book won't be one on tragedies; as those who have followed my previous book, Endless Dantian, would know, I don't like tragedies and I don't intend to write them.

Arc 5 - Invincible

Chapter 412: Avenge Him!

"Lu Chong!"

After hearing the anxious bellows, Zhang Xuan stepped out of his trance from the Soul Tempering of a Mentor's Calligraphy, and the first sight that appeared before him was Lu Chong's chest being pierced by a sword. Countless thoughts immediately exploded in his head, and his eyes reddened uncontrollably.

Even though he met this student considerably later than his other direct disciples, the other party held the greatest trust and most earnest emotions for him.

"Die!"

Bellowing furiously, Zhang Xuan's head jolted, and a golden book suddenly appeared.

All of a sudden, a might capable of causing the entire world to crumble appeared. A gale rose, and the clouds swiftly flew by. A book as heavy as a mountain abruptly fell straight on Commander Liang's head.

Pacha!

Without the slightest obstruction, as though a watermelon crushed by a steel hammer, his head burst into bloodied remnants. Under the intense shock wave from the blow, a huge hole, several

hundred meters deep and wide, appeared in the col.

"What?"

Ding Mu, Lin Long, and the others, who were hiding behind the boulder, preparing to launch a second wave of assault, were dumbstruck with terror. They didn't think that the Zhizun realm advanced stage Commander Liang could be destroyed by an object the other party thrown out casually. Their faces paled, and they nearly fainted from fear.

They knew that Yang shi would surely bestow Zhang Xuan with some life-saving treasure, but how could they have known that it would be such a fearsome object!

Even Transcendent Mortal experts weren't capable of striking out a huge hole in the ground.

"Escape..."

Knowing that it was impossible to withstand such might, Ding Mu didn't dare to hesitate in the least. He immediately turned around to flee.

Beast Tamer Zhou Jin also quickly followed suit.

The two of them had reached Zhizun realm, and their speed was astonishing. In just two breaths, their silhouettes turned into a white flash, and they were already a hundred meters away.

"Your Highness, wait for me..."

Not expecting her husband, as well her greatest backer, to abandon her without any warning, Lin Long hurriedly chased him with a ghastly pale face.

"Die..."

Upon seeing someone run out from the boulder, how could Zhang Xuan not tell what was going on? Roaring frenziedly, he commanded the golden page rotating in the air toward Lin Long.

Boom!

The entire ground quaked violently. Yet again, a huge hole several meters wide appeared. Smashed by the immense might of the golden book, Lin Long was reduced to meat paste. Having fled swiftly, Ding Mu and Zhou Jin managed to escape the crisis.

"Ah..."

"Hurry up and get on the savage beast!"

Seeing the sight behind them, the duo felt even more frightened. At this moment, Ding Mu couldn't care less about anything else. Leaping onto the back of the Gold-scaled Lightning Beast, he immediately commanded it to fly as far away as it could.

Zhang Xuan's mystic tool was simply too powerful. The might of his tool could even smash a Transcendent Mortal expert easily, needless to say them.

If they couldn't escape, the only thing that awaits them would be death.

"Die!"

Howling furiously, Zhang Xuan was just about to send the golden page straight toward the duo and the savage beast when 'weng!', the book disappeared. In the next moment, an indescribable fatigue overwhelmed him, leaving him groggy-headed, ready to faint at any moment.

"Lu Chong..."

Knowing that it was impossible for him to catch up to a Zhizun realm intermediate stage savage beast, Zhang Xuan withstood his dizziness to examine the condition of his student.

The other party's eyes were tightly shut, and he had already lost consciousness.

However, as though delighted to see that his teacher was safe, even though he couldn't open his eyes, a faint smile hung on his lips.

He was still tightly holding on to the sword on his chest, unwilling to let go even upon death.

As though he was declaring that even upon death...

As long as teacher was fine... everything was alright!

"Heaven's Path zhenqi can cure all wounds, you'll be fine..."

Tears that felt like burning oil flowed down Zhang Xuan's cheeks. Grasping the other party's palm, Zhang Xuan furiously infused the Heaven's Path zhenqi within him into the other party's body.

"Tea-teacher, how did you know that my purpose is to exact vengeance?"

"Liu laoshi, please guide me..."

"You can't hurt him, because... he's my teacher!"

...

Recalling the bits and pieces of the youngster before him, Zhang Xuan trembled in agitation.

After two years of silence, Lu Chong had become a reticent person. During their time together, he didn't speak much. Most of

the time, what Zhang Xuan saw was his determined gaze and reliable back...

In order to exact his vengeance, Lu Chong knelt in front of the academy for seven days straight and remain silent for two years. Despite the unimaginable pain from the poison tempering, Lu Chong persisted on with it. Even though he knew that the Lin Clan was powerful, he still charged straight at them...

This reticent but determined youngster felt cold, but his heart was filled with warmth.

To protect the teacher that he respected and admired from the bottom of his heart, he was willing to give in his own life.

Lu Chong, my student, I have failed to protect you!

Wake up, give me a chance to make it up to you...

Zhang Xuan infused the Heaven's Path zhenqi furiously into the other party, but Lu Chong's slim figure didn't budge at all.

...

Seeing the frenzied look on the young man before her, Mo Yu's face paled.

Everything happened too quickly. By the time Mo Yu saw Liang

Qingming, it was already too late. She thought that Zhang Xuan would meet his demise.

Yet, she couldn't have imagined that a student would give up his life just to save him.

Mo Yu clenched her fists tightly and walked forward.

"Zhang Xuan!"

She bellowed, but there was no response.

"Zhang Xuan!"

She shouted once more, and only then did the most radiant genius of Tianwu Royal City raise his head blankly, as though he had lost his soul.

"Don't panic. You possess unparalleled medical skills... Lu Chong will be fine!"

Feeling a deep piercing pain in her heart upon seeing the state of the man before her, Mo Yu consoled.

"Right, my medical skills..."

Upon the other party's reminder, Zhang Xuan finally recovered.

Focus returned to his blank and soulless eyes.

That's right!

On top of his medical skills, he had the Library of Heaven's Path.

There was nothing that could hide from the heavens. As long as Lu Chong wasn't reduced to ashes, there would surely be a solution for his situation!

A flicker of hope appeared in Zhang Xuan's eyes.

"Flaws!"

Zhang Xuan thought, and a book appeared in his head. He hurriedly flipped through it.

"There's still hope for him..."

Upon seeing the contents on it, Zhang Xuan's body trembled. In an instant, his entire face turned red.

He thought that being stabbed by the sword of a Zhizun realm expert, Lu Chong's death was inevitable. Yet, there was still a breath left in him.

All kinds of flaws were written on the book; Lu Chong's

meridians had been crushed by the other party's Zhizun realm zhenqi, and his internal organs had also suffered heavy damage. Under such conditions, anyone else would have been dead.

However, having cultivated the Heaven's Path Golden Body and Poison Body, Lu Chong's body was several times stronger than that of an ordinary cultivator. On top of that, Zhang Xuan had infused his Heaven's Path zhenqi into the other party timely, thus preserving a final breath within him.

"I should heal his meridians and internal organs first!"

Having assimilated all the knowledge within the books in the Physician Guild, even without the Library of Heaven's Path, Zhang Xuan's medical skill wasn't inferior to that of a 3-star physician. He knew that the priority at hand was to heal the other party's injuries first.

Thus, he immediately directed his Heaven's Path zhenqi to flow throughout the other party's body, healing his damaged meridians and organs.

At the same time, he fed the other party a recovery pill.

Having ransacked the Lin Clan, he had many of such recovery pills within his storage ring. If it was effective, he was willing to feed all of them to him.

"Zhang Xuan..."

Seeing spirit returning to the young man, and that he was starting to treat Lu Chong, Mo Yu heaved a sigh of relief. Then, lowering her head to take a look, her eyes narrowed.

Under the application of Zhang Xuan's zhenqi, Lu Chong's wounds recovered at a visible pace. His pale face, due to excessive loss of blood, also slowly regained its redness. Even though he was still unconscious, his wounds seemed to have already fully recovered on the surface.

"Healing a person's body thoroughly with just zhenqi?"

Mo Yu's body trembled in disbelief.

Even though she had seen Zhang Xuan's medical skills before, he had often made use of silver needles to stimulate one's acupoints before issuing prescriptions to follow up.

To be able to heal one's injuries and repair one's meridians like that... How pure must his zhenqi be?

"Could he possess... superior zhenqi?"

The thought flashed across Mo Yu's eyes.

It was said that due to the absurd purity of superior zhenqi, it could be used in treatment or clearing away blockages in a person's

meridians... All along, Mo Yu thought that it was only a legend. To think that there would come a day which she would see such a sight with her own eyes!

To possess cultivation technique capable of cultivating zhenqi of such caliber, how powerful must Yang shi be?

It was no wonder why Su shi and Ling shi would obey his commands willingly!

Hu!

After repairing the final injury on Lu Chong's meridians, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief.

Zhang Xuan refreshed the book on Lu Chong, and with a single look, his face steeled.

"Teacher, how is Lu Chong?" Zhao Ya asked worriedly.

"There isn't any problem with his physical condition, but his consciousness has sunk into a deep sleep. It's hard to tell when he'll be able to wake up!"

The damage Lu Chong had suffered previously was too tremendous. Even if the unparalleled Heaven's Path zhenqi could heal all of his injuries, it was completely helpless as to his mental condition.

Under the current situation, it was possible that Lu Chong might awake anytime, perhaps even at the next instant, but it was also possible that he might never wake up.

"What should we do?" Zhao Ya asked.

"I don't know either!"

Zhang Xuan shook his head in desolation.

Even though he had taken in all of the knowledge within the books of the Physician Guild for his own, he still wasn't able to find a solution to this situation.

Blocked meridians, afflictions, inability to break through one's cultivation bottleneck... The Heaven's Path zhenqi could cure all of those. However, consciousness was a matter of one's soul. It was something incredibly unfathomable and hard to grasp. No matter how formidable Heaven's Path zhenqi was, how could something physical affect the ethereal?

"We might not have any solutions, but Yang shi might have an idea!" Seeing the awful look on the young man's face, Mo Yu consoled.

"Yang shi?"

Zhang Xuan's complexion turned even more awful.

"I've heard that upon reaching 7-star, master teachers would be capable of using one's words to influence one's actions, consciousness, and soul. Lu Chong has only fallen into a deep sleep. If a master teacher of such a level were to delve into his mind and wake him up, Lu Chong might regain consciousness!" Mo Yu continued.

"Influence one's consciousness and soul?" Zhang Xuan clenched his fists tightly together.

It was just like what the other party had said. Lu Chong's consciousness was just asleep. If someone could delve into his mind and wake him up, it was possible that Lu Chong might regain consciousness.

"Un. Even though I've only heard it from others, it's true that high ranked master teachers possess unfathomable means beyond us. We might be unable to find a solution now, but it doesn't mean that there isn't one..." Mo Yu replied.

"You're right!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

It was just like his Innate Fetal Poison. Even though he didn't find a solution for it in Tianxuan Kingdom or the Poison Hall, there was definitely one out there in the vast world, in one of the innumerable Master Teacher Pavilion. Even though it was like searching for a needle in a haystack, at least it gave him a direction.

He was helpless toward Lu Chong's current situation, but as he grew stronger and read more books, he might be able to find a solution to his problem.

"I'll eventually find a solution to cure him, but before that..."

After hearing Mo Yu's words of consolation, Zhang Xuan felt at ease. But soon, he narrowed his eyes, and killing intent burst from his body, drowning the entire sky in it as though a torrent.

"I will... avenge him!"

Chapter 413: Xuanyuan Kingdom's Strength

As a person born in the information age, Zhang Xuan was brought up to settle conflicts peacefully. Despite having transcended into this world, a part of him was still resistant to claiming the lives of others. However, who knew that a moment of benevolence would ultimately lead to Lu Chong's current plight.

If only he had known, he would have instructed Little Su to get rid of Lin Long and Commander Liang, and the tragedy today wouldn't have occurred.

"Avenge?"

Mo Yu frowned. "Lu Chong has to be avenged, but... do you know anything about Xuanyuan Kingdom?"

Zhang Xuan shook his head.

As a lower ranked kingdom, Tianwu Kingdom didn't have much information on Xuanyuan Kingdom.

As such, Zhang Xuan's understanding of Xuanyuan Kingdom was also severely limited. He knew some brief details, but the content seemed to become extremely brief or absent altogether when it came to the more confidential information.

At the very least, in terms of national strength and influence, he knew very little about it.

"Despite not knowing anything, you wish to avenge him?"

Mo Yu rolled her eyes.

You sure are courageous. The person you are facing is the crown prince of Xuanyuan Kingdom. To make things worse, the incumbent emperor is ill, and the crown prince could potentially ascend to the throne at any moment.

Even at this very moment, he already possesses significant authority over the troops in the country, and with just a single command, he can turn all of them against you.

Putting aside the hulking number of troops, just by considering the number of experts they have, it is nigh impossible for you to succeed.

Unless you possess a cultivation realm that can match Su shi.

But even if you attain such level of strength, you will still meet with all kinds of obstructions in your attempt to kill a crown prince of a Conferred Kingdom.

"To earn considerable prestige and standing in Xuanyuan Kingdom, one must at least reach Zhizun realm intermediate stage! Even though you possess strength comparable to a Half-Zhizun cultivator at the moment, it will be difficult for you to stand up against real Zhizun realm experts!"

After a moment of hesitation, Mo Yu explained carefully.

The young man before her had just almost lost his student. She was afraid that he might be agitated into doing something atrocious.

"It's not just difficult, I'll be completely helpless against them!" Zhang Xuan fell into contemplation after hearing Mo Yu's words.

Zhizun realm was the highest level a Fighter could reach. At intermediate stage, one would possess 20,000 ding of strength; advanced stage, 30,000 ding; pinnacle, 40,000 ding.

Even taking into consideration both Zhang Xuan's physical and zhenqi cultivation, the total might he could harness only added up to around 15,000 ding. He was still a long way from rivaling the more powerful Zhizun realm cultivators.

On top of that, he was only using strength as a gauge. After reaching Zhizun realm, one's reaction speed and comprehension toward battle techniques would rise significantly. That was also the main reason why no Zongshi could match up to a Zhizun.

"It's good that you know. My suggestion is that... since the Master Teacher Tournament is going to be held in three months' time, it's best for you not to get involved in such trouble at the moment. As long as you join the tournament and get a good placing, with your newfound standing, you'll be able to request the Master Teacher Pavilion to avenge Lu Chong! By then, no one will

utter their objection. This is the most convenient and plausible method you have!" Mo Yu shared her thoughts.

Zhang Xuan's cultivation was still too low at the moment. If he were to attempt to exact vengeance in his current state, he would only be putting himself in grave danger.

Since that was the case, it would be more viable for him to participate in the Master Teacher Tournament first. As long as he wins the tournament, with his newfound prestigious standing, no one would dare to stop him from avenging Lu Chong.

Master teachers do possess high standing, but even that is relative.

2-star master teachers are a formidable existence in Tianwu Kingdom, but when in Xuanyuan Kingdom and the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, they don't mean much at all.

Only after proving one's immense strength or unlimited potential would one be highly regarded and feared.

Only then would their words carry weight.

"I can't wait for three months, and I believe that... Lu Chong doesn't want me to wait either!"

Glancing at his unconscious student, a sharp glint flashed across Zhang Xuan's eyes.

Three months was too long, Zhang Xuan's couldn't restrain his rage for that long.

The other party had left Lu Chong in such a miserable state, and he still had to allow the culprit to go carefree for another three months? You must be joking!

"But your current strength... isn't even at Half-Zhizun realm yet, how do you intend to exact vengeance? You would require the strength of a Zhizun realm pinnacle at minimum to do so. Otherwise, you'll only end up killed..."

Seeing the resolute determination in Zhang Xuan's eyes, Mo Yu panicked.

What was wrong with this fellow?

I have already told you that even Zhizun realm experts dare not do anything in Xuanyuan Kingdom, so what in the world does a person like you, who hasn't even reached Half-Zhizun yet, hope to achieve there? Aren't you just courting death?

One must know that there was a huge bunch of Zhizun realm pinnacle experts within a Conferred Kingdom. If one wanted to go against the royal family, one had to be at least a Half-Transcension.

"Zhizun realm pinnacle? Simple!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Simple? Could it be that... you have an idea in mind?" Hearing Zhang Xuan's confident declaration, Mo Yu's eyes lit up.

Seems like he has his own plans, I am probably overthinking it...

After all, how can a genius act so rashly!

Just as Mo Yu heaved a long sigh of relief and prepared to ask Zhang Xuan about his plans, the young man before him declared gravely, "I'll just have to reach Zhizun realm pinnacle in the next few days then!"

Pu!

Mo Yu's body swayed, and she nearly choked on her saliva.

The heck!

Can you possibly say anything more ridiculous than that?

Zhizun realm is the last trial a Fighter has to undergo, and the difficulty in advancing to that realm is multiple folds higher than that of Zongshi realm.

Do you think that it's like cabbages in the market, and you can easily obtain it by paying a gold coin?

Reach Zhizun realm in the next few days...

Can you be anymore irrational than that?

If those who have been stuck in Zongshi realm pinnacle were to hear your words, they would surely pummel you to death.

And I actually really thought you would have a good idea in mind, to think this would be it...

"Zhao Ya, hurry up and persuade your teacher..."

Unable to stand it any longer, Mo Yu turned to the lady beside her.

"Persuade? Teacher is right, why should I persuade him?" Zhao Ya asked doubtfully as she stared at Mo Yu.

"..."

Mo Yu flew into a frenzy, "That's Zhizun realm, Zhizun! It's not as easy to achieve a breakthrough as you think! Even if your teacher were to dedicate three entire months to his cultivation, it would be impossible for him to reach Zhizun realm..."

"Teacher has only used a single month to advance from Pixue realm to Zongshi realm pinnacle. In fact, when he first arrived at

Tianwu Royal City, he was only at Tongxuan realm pinnacle. But at this very moment, he has already reached Zongshi realm pinnacle, and it has only been ten days since then... Don't worry about it, it's not that big of a deal!" Zhao Ya replied.

They'd seen all kinds of miracles from their teacher, and this had bred deep, unwavering trust toward him in them. Putting aside reaching Zhizun realm pinnacle, even if Zhang Xuan claimed that he would reach Transcendent Mortal realm tomorrow, they would surely believe it.

How big a matter is it; must you react so vehemently?

"..." Mo Yu.

What the heck... was with all of them!

Not only were they not shocked by Zhang Xuan's declaration to reach Zhizun realm pinnacle in just a few days, they even thought that it was natural?

Mo Yu hurriedly turned her gaze to Zheng Yang, Wang Ying, and the others.

However, all she saw was their looks of disdain, as though mocking her for her narrow outlook..

With immense frustration squeezing her heart, Mo Yu spurted blood.

To think that I, the princess of Tianwu Kingdom and a 1-star master teacher, would be looked down on by a bunch of students... What in the world is this?

But thinking about it... their words did make sense.

The fellow before her couldn't be understood through common sense. When he first took the master teacher examination, he wasn't even at Zongshi realm. And yet, when he faced the Lin Clan, he was already at Zongshi realm pinnacle.

There was only an interval of six to seven days between the two events!

If he could advance into Zongshi realm that swiftly, then perhaps... he might be able to do the same for Zhizun realm as well.

"Even if you reach Zhizun realm pinnacle, Ding Mu is still the crown prince of Xuanyuan Kingdom. If you were to kill him, it will cause instability in the country. I'm afraid that... the Master Teacher Pavilion might hinder your vengeance!" Forcefully suppressing her bursting frustration from being looked down upon, Mo Yu said.

"Hinder? Isn't the Master Teacher Pavilion supposed to protect master teachers?" Baffled, Zhang Xuan frowned.

The Master Teacher Pavilion was an organization created by master teachers for master teachers.

Given that the other party had attempted to assassinate a master teacher, even if the Master Teacher Pavilion chose not to crack down on the culprit, how could it defend the culprit?

"The Master Teacher Pavilion does protect the welfare of master teachers, but... if a Conferred Kingdom is involved, the matter becomes uncertain! After all, if a crown prince of a kingdom of such level were to be killed, it would definitely cause a tremendous chaos in the country. Perhaps, it might even result in war, the death of innocent civilians, and displacement of population. In order to prevent this kind of situation, it is highly likely that the Master Teacher Pavilion might choose the other party over you! After all, you are only a 2-star primary master teacher, so you don't wield sufficient weight yet..."

Mo Yu continued, "Besides, the Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher Pavilion is close with the royal family. As an outsider, it's likely that you'll be shunned instead!"

"This..."

Zhang Xuan fell into deep contemplation.

Even though Mo Yu's words were frustrating, he had to admit that they made sense.

The purpose of the presence of Master Teacher Pavilions was to maintain peace in the region.

Given that Zhang Xuan was going to kill Xuanyuan Kingdom's crown prince, it would be hard for the Master Teacher Pavilion to simply watch by the side.

Besides, no matter how impartial the Master Teacher Pavilion was, the Xuanyuan royal family had been in power for innumerable years. Along with the passing of time, they had established close ties with one another. With the identity of an outsider 2-star master teacher, it was indeed difficult for him to get them to his side.

Rules are impartial, but humans have feelings.

"That's indeed a problem!"

Upon thinking of all of these, Zhang Xuan nodded. Then, turning to Mo Yu, he asked, "Isn't there any solution for this matter?"

"There is, just that... it's too difficult!"

Mo Yu shook her head.

"Oh?"

"If you want to stop the Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher

Pavilion from hindering you, or even support you, you have to impress them with your capability." Mo Yu said.

"Impress them with my capability? You mean... Pavilion Crashing?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

If one wanted the Master Teacher Pavilion to submit to one swiftly, there was only a single method. That was... Pavilion Crashing!

It was similar to dojo crashing.

With the strength of an individual, one would face the entire Master Teacher Pavilion. Once one succeeded, regardless of how strong one was or what requests one had, the Master Teacher Pavilion was to obey without any conditions.

This matter was written within the books of the Master Teacher Pavilion, and upon Mo Yu's reminder, he recalled it.

"That's right, I'm referring to Pavilion Crashing! However, the master of Xuanyuan Kingdom's Master Teacher Pavilion is a 3-star master teacher, and his strength has reached Half-Transcension... Without the strength and capability of a 4-star master teacher, it'll be impossible for you to succeed in the Pavilion Crashing." Mo Yu explained patiently.

The master and elders of Xuanyuan Kingdom's Master Teacher Pavilion had all reached 3-star, and they possessed fearsome

cultivation to match it.

Pavilion Crashing consisted of tests of all fields. It was similar to Pill Debate; without sufficient strength and knowledge, it was impossible for one to succeed.

"If they know what's better for them, they'll choose not to interfere in this matter... But if they insist on protecting that crown prince..."

Zhang Xuan's eyes narrowed, and he clenched his fists tightly, "Then, I don't mind... crashing it!"

Chapter 414: Xuanyuan's Beast Hall

Lu Chong could even disregard his own life for him. As his teacher, what could he not give up for the other party?

So what if he had to face a Conferred Kingdom?

So what if he had to face off against a Master Teacher Pavilion?

Lu Chong, don't worry! Regardless of who the other party is, to dare to reduce you to such a state, as your teacher, I will make him regret his actions!

"Fine..."

Knowing that it was impossible to persuade the fellow before her, Mo Yu shook her head helplessly, and decided not to harp on this issue. "So, what do you intend to do now?"

"I'll head to Xuanyuan Kingdom!" Zhang Xuan replied. At the same time, he whistled, and the air current above suddenly grew chaotic. The Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast whizzed over from the distant sky and landed right before him.

Only in Xuanyuan Kingdom would he be able to find sufficient Zhizun realm cultivation technique manuals for him to grow stronger swiftly.

If he were to remain in Tianwu Kingdom, his strength would just stagnate.

Just like Mo Yu said, without sufficient strength, it was impossible for him to accomplish anything at all. He might even lose his life due to it.

"Xuanyuan Kingdom's capital, Xuanyuan Royal City, is a few hundred thousand kilometers away from here. Given the Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast's Half-Zhizun realm strength, even if it were to fly with all of its strength, it would take at least seven to eight days!" Mo Yu replied.

As a Conferred Kingdom, Xuanyuan Kingdom's territory was significantly larger than Tianwu Kingdom. Taking seven to eight days to travel to its capital from here could already be considered fast.

"Seven to eight days?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

That was already around the duration he had stayed in Tianwu Royal City.

Mo Yu nodded, "Indeed. This is already the limit of a Half-Zhizun realm savage beast. Well, if it reaches Zhizun realm, it would only take three days. Otherwise, we can only go over like that!"

Half-Zhizun realm and Zhizun realm was only a small leap in one's cultivation stage, but for an aerial savage beast, it meant

more than a twofold increase in its flying speed.

"Zhizun realm aerial savage beasts can travel that quickly? Then, I'll raise its cultivation realm then..." Zhang Xuan nodded.

"Raise its cultivation realm?" Mo Yu flashed a bitter smile.

She'd almost forgotten it. On top of being a genius master teacher, the fellow before her was a formidable beast tamer as well. Even until now, she had been unable to make sense of the 'Beast Pummeling Taming Method' that the other party created. She couldn't understand how it could make savage beasts obedient to one, and why it would induce a breakthrough in them.

Lifting her head to take a look, she saw that the young man before her had already gotten into action; he walked over to the Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast and smashed his fist onto it.

Peng peng peng peng!

If it was any other beast tamer, it would be impossible for them to punch their tamed beasts so fearlessly. Even if a contract had been established between them, such an action could easily incur the other party's resentment, and this may turn out to be a potential threat in the future.

Yet, when Zhang Xuan's fist landed on the savage beast, the huge fellow howled in delight. A euphoric expression slowly surfaced on its face as it lay motionless on the ground.

To react in such a way while being pummeled, that savage beast was truly one-of-a-kind...

Boom!

After a moment of pummeling, the Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast released a piercing howl, and it broke through its bottleneck. In an instant, its aura surged and pierced through the clouds.

Zhizun realm!

Upon reaching a whole new realm, the Howling Firmament Beast's physique grew larger, and its movements became sharper.

The group climbed onto the back of the savage beast, and after ascertaining the direction, it started flying toward the horizon.

...

Sitting cross-legged in the room on the back of the Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast, Zhang Xuan recalled the events from earlier.

Due to the dire circumstances then, all that was on his mind then was to kill Liang Qingming. And somehow, the golden book suddenly appeared and crushed him to death.

Could it be that... the Book of Heaven's Path also possessed the ability to smash someone to death?

When he first obtained the Library of Heaven's Path, he thought that while others were throwing out all kinds of mystic treasures, he would end up hurling books at others... To think that it was true!

Recalling the might of the book, Zhang Xuan was awed.

For a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert to be smashed into a lump of meat in an instant, the might of the attack was already beyond that of ordinary Transcendent Mortal realm experts.

In other words, even Su shi would have been unable to withstand that attack!

Fearsome!

"But... it's a one-time consumable!"

Zhang Xuan shook his head helplessly.

The move was indeed strong, but... it depleted the golden pages within the Book of Heaven's Path, and with that, he had no golden pages left.

It seemed like he would have to bring in more students, win their gratitude, and produce a few more golden pages for his own security.

To be able to assimilate the content of the books in the Library of Heaven's Path into his own knowledge, raise his Soul Depth by 5.0 instantaneously, destroy an enemy far beyond one's cultivation realm...

Zhang Xuan had only discovered three uses of the golden page, but every single one of them was fearsome in their own right.

If he could gather sufficient golden pages, he wouldn't have to fear anyone anymore. He could just toss a book at anyone who dares to provoke him!

"Judging from how long the golden book was materialized... there seems to be a time limit of ten seconds!"

He tried to recall the details of the previous battle.

Seeing Lu Chong being impaled right before him had clouded Zhang Xuan's mind, so he didn't think much into the details then. However, now that he had calmed down, he was able to deduce some matters by analyzing the situation.

This Book of Heaven's Path could be summoned at Zhang Xuan's will to smash his enemies.

However, after leaving the Library of Heaven's Path, it could only sustain itself for around ten breaths or so before disappearing.

If not for this time limit, Ding Mu wouldn't have been able to escape!

This book could even smash Transcendent Mortal experts to death, needless to say, those two fellows.

"After going through Soul Tempering of a Mentor's Calligraphy, my Soul Depth has increased considerably!"

Looking at Kong shi's personal handwriting had sent him into a unique state that nourished his mind.

If not for the lapse in his awareness due to that, with the Heaven's Path Movement Art, it would be difficult for even a Zhizun realm expert to kill him!

"My Soul Depth has reached 12.1. That's sufficient for me take the 4-star master teacher examination!"

Even though the Soul Tempering of a Mentor's Calligraphy only managed to work for a short period of time, given that it was induced by Kong shi's handwriting, it still granted him a huge growth in his Soul Depth, raising it by 1.0.

Given that the examination requirement on one's Soul Depth increased by 3.0 for each tier, Zhang Xuan's Soul Depth was

already sufficient for him to take the 4-star master teacher examination.

"With the rise in my Soul Depth, my Eye of Insight has also grown significantly stronger! In the past, I could only peer into the essence of cultivators possessing the same level or weaker cultivation than me, but now, I can easily see the flaws and problems of even a Half-Zhizun!"

As Zhang Xuan's Soul Depth reached 12.1, the level of a 4-star master teacher, his Eye of Insight also enjoyed a qualitative improvement.

Given his cultivation realm of Zongshi realm pinnacle, it was impossible for him to peer into the flaws of a Half-Zhizun in the past.

But now, even if an expert of that level were to appear before him, Zhang Xuan would still be able to see through his flaws easily even without the Library of Heaven's Path.

The Library of Heaven's Path was formidable, but it had many flaws.

For example, it required one to execute his battle technique or be unconscious before a book on one would be compiled. On the other hand, just by expending some of one's Soul Depth, the Eye of Insight allowed one to peer into another's flaws. In a sense, it was much more practical and applicable than the Library of Heaven's Path.

"Not only so, the efficacy of my Impartation of Heaven's Will has also improved significantly!"

Currently, Zhang Xuan had comprehended a total of two unique abilities of master teachers.

The Eye of Insight and Impartation of Heaven's Will.

Through the Impartation of Heaven's Will, by expending his Soul Depth, Zhang Xuan could easily induce trust in another. On top of that, he could also drive another person's cultivation through his words.

In the past, the Impartation of Heaven's Will only influenced cultivators who were much weaker than him. But now, he would be able to influence those of the same cultivation realm as him, Zongshi realm pinnacle, through words alone.

All in all, the benefits that he derived from the Soul Tempering of a Mentor's Calligraphy were substantial. However, they were mainly limited to the master teacher abilities; it didn't contribute to his cultivation or any other aspects.

"All of you, show me your battle techniques!"

After sorting out his current state, Zhang Xuan turned to look at Zhao Ya and the others.

It had been a while since he had last given them guidance. Even though they had improved swiftly, it was clear that they were unable to keep up with Zhang Xuan's footsteps. Thus, it was imperative for Zhang Xuan to pull up their cultivation so that they could at least fend for themselves.

"Yes!"

On the broad back of the savage beast, the group demonstrated their battle techniques, and Zhang Xuan offered them pointers one by one.

Three days passed in a flash. After Zhang Xuan's guidance, the group's cultivation rose significantly. Wang Ying, Zheng Yang, and the others reached Pixue realm, and even Yuan Tao, whose cultivation was often lagging behind the others, had managed to open one acupoint.

By unleashing the potential of her unique constitution, Zhao Ya even managed to reach Zongshi realm advanced stage.

With the Pure Yin Body and Heaven's Path Sword Art, she would be a match for even typical Zongshi realm pinnacle experts.

Zhang Xuan also offered Mo Yu some guidance, and the latter improved significantly as well.

"Why aren't we heading to Xuanyuan Royal City?"

After consecutive days of flight, just when the capital was in sight, Zhang Xuan suddenly commanded the Howling Firmament Beast to steer toward another direction, heading toward the mountain range not too far away.

"I need a place to raise my strength!" replied Zhang Xuan calmly, looking out of the window.

"Raise your strength?" Mo Yu blinked in confusion.

Seeing how adamant Zhang Xuan was at avenging Lu Chong, Mo Yu thought that he would cultivate hard in these three days so that he could at least reach Half-Zhizun. Yet, other than offering them guidance and taking care of Lu Chong, he didn't even bother cultivating at all.

And only when he was close to reaching the capital did he suddenly speak of raising his strength...

Did this fellow require some unique location for his cultivation?

"The Beast Hall!" Zhang Xuan explained.

After reading through all of the books in Tianwu Kingdom, even though Zhang Xuan had yet to get a good grasp of the various powers located within Xuanyuan Kingdom, at the very least, he managed to find information on the locations of the occupation guilds.

Similar to that of the Xuanluo Mountain Range Beast Hall, Xuanyuan Kingdom's Beast Hall wasn't in the city either. It was located in the depths of the mountain range several dozen kilometers away from the capital.

"Beast Hall? You're going there to raise your cultivation?"

Hearing the location, Mo Yu was even more perplexed.

She had heard of savage beasts visiting the Beast Hall to raise their strength, but she didn't know that it applied for humans as well.

Could it be that his cultivation technique required the presence of savage beasts?

...

Just as Zhang Xuan was heading for the Beast Hall in the small town located in the vast area controlled by the Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall, three figures leaped off the back of an aerial savage beast.

Of them, two were Zhang Xuan's acquaintances; Xuanluo Mountain Range Beast Hall's Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang.

A man in his late twenties accompanied them. That man's chest was puffed out, and he had an arrogant look on his face.

"Beast Tamer Luo, this is the Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall, where the Beast Taming Competition will be held!" Hall Master Feng said.

"Un, I know! Don't worry, a championship, is it? I'll definitely take first place for you all!" Beast Tamer Luo waved his hands casually, as though speaking of an insignificant issue.

"Ah..."

Hearing the arrogant words of the other party, Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang exchanged glances, and a bitter smile flashed across their faces.

This Beast Tamer Luo was one of the more talented beast tamers in Xuanluo Mountain Range Beast Hall, but he was, by no means, the most talented one.

If not for the competition being brought forward by four months, and the fact that they were unable to find the candidate they had chosen, Zhang Xuan, they would have never brought this fellow over.

Since the Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast had been taken by that fellow, the group could only travel here on a Zongshi realm savage beast. Due to its limited speed, it took them more than a month to arrive here, and all of them were wearied by the long journey.

More than a month ago, Zhang Xuan had still been looking for the Poison Hall. Since he wasn't even at Tianwu Royal City yet, they were unable to find him

"Why? You don't trust my capability?"

"Hmph, why do you keep mentioning that Zhang Xuan? He's a 2-star beast tamer, but so am I! He passed the examination on his first try, but so did I! In fact, I even did better than him! How can you be so confident in him and yet doubt me?"

Seeing the expressions of the duo, Beast Tamer Luo flung his hands in displeasure.

Chapter 415: Ten Beasts Cage

What do you mean?

That Zhang Xuan you speak of might be a genius, but aren't I one as well?

Why do you hold so high expectations of him yet think so lowly of me?

We are both 2-star beast tamers, I am not inferior to him in any way!

"That's not what we mean, it's just that..."

Hall Master Feng smiled awkwardly, "The Beast Taming Competition gathers all of the geniuses in the vicinity of Xuanyuan Kingdom, so we mustn't let our guards down. We have to proceed carefully!"

"Proceed carefully? What is there to be careful about! I've studied the previous competition, and all I've to do is to tame a Zhizun realm primary stage savage beast. Even though my current cultivation realm hasn't reached Zhizun realm, I am still confident of doing so!"

Clenching his fists tightly, the young man drove his cultivation.

Zongshi realm pinnacle!

To reach Zongshi realm pinnacle under thirty; even in Tianwu Kingdom, he could be considered as a genius. It was no wonder he was so confident.

"The test for the competition changes each time, so I'm not too sure about what will be tested this time round. However... I've heard that the Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall has captured a powerful savage beast a while ago, and they've tried taming it multiple times, only to end in failure. In order to resolve the matter quickly so as to prevent any unnecessary trouble, they decided to bring forward the competition so as to gather the geniuses from all regions here!"

After a moment's hesitation, Hall Master Feng decided to reveal the news that he had heard. "In my view... I think it is very probable for the test to be related to that powerful savage beast they caught!"

"I share your sentiments as well. The Beast Taming Competition is held once every five years, and the timing has always been fixed. There's no reason for them to suddenly push it forward just to conduct it earlier!" Beast Tamer Wang nodded in agreement.

A friend of theirs from Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall had secretly delivered this news to them. However, whether it was true or not still had to be seen.

However, based on their analysis, the intelligence was likely to be

true.

Otherwise, there was no reason for them to push forward the competition all of the sudden, catching all of the candidates off guard.

"The Beast Hall has captured a powerful savage beast? What cultivation realm is it?"

Beast Tamer Luo was surprised.

"I'm not too sure about the details either!" Hall Master Feng shook his head.

He might be the head of the Xuanluo Mountain Range Beast Hall, but he still wasn't qualified to learn of the confidential secrets in the Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall.

"Since even 3-star beast tamers are unable to tame it, who of the younger generation could possibly succeed? Even if it's related to that, it'll probably be researching the savage beast's habits, likes, dislikes, and such to help with the taming process."

Beast Tamer Luo lifted his head proudly and boasted, "On those aspects, I won't lose out to anyone!"

Only those beneath thirty are eligible to participate in the Beast Taming Competition hosted by the Beast Hall. Beast Tamer Luo didn't dare to say much about the experienced beast tamers, but

under the age limit, he was confident that there were very few people who could triumph over him in the field of beast taming in the vicinity of Xuanyuan Kingdom.

"I am aware of your capability, but I've heard that numerous talented beast tamers have emerged this year, and all of them are formidable as well! Wei Youdao from Jibei Kingdom, Jiang Nanping from Kaixiong Kingdom, Ji Wuxin from Hongquan Manor... They are all powerful adversaries who have reached 2-star pinnacle below thirty...

Seeing Beast Tamer Luo's confident face, Hall Master Feng glanced at Beast Tamer Wang before speaking.

The young man before him was a talented beast tamer, and if not for Zhang Xuan, he would be the number one beast tamer among the younger generation in Xuanluo Mountain Range.

However, he had a clear, fatal flaw: arrogance.

If it wasn't for them being unable to get into contact with Zhang Xuan, honestly speaking, they wouldn't have approached him for this competition.

As a beast tamer, it was good to be confident but disastrous to be arrogant. Arrogance could potentially earn one the ire of the savage beast one was trying to tame.

Having headed the Beast Hall for so many years, Hall Master

Feng had seen many formidable beast tamers being torn apart by savage beasts due to this.

"They're indeed not bad. I've cross hands with them, and back then, I was indeed not a match for them. However, I've learned a new beast taming technique since then, so it won't be easy for them to triumph over me..." Beast Tamer Luo said, placing his hands behind his back.

However, halfway through his words, a cold harrumph sounded behind him.

"Such arrogant words. I was wondering who it was, so it's a braggart!"

A young man walked over and scoffed.

"Fang Jin? Why, you wish to compete with me?" Recognizing the other party, Beast Tamer Luo frowned.

"Compete? Luo Tang, do you think you are worthy of competing with me?"

Chuckling softly, Fang Jin drove his cultivation, and his powerful aura gushed into the surroundings.

"Half... Half-Zhizun?"

Beast Tamer Luo widened his eyes in shock as he subconsciously retreated two steps.

He thought that it was already a formidable feat for him to reach Zongshi realm pinnacle. To think that Fang Jin had already reached Half-Zhizun!

The stronger a beast tamer was, the easier it was for them to win the respect of a savage beast and tame it.

"Two years ago, we were all Zongshi realm pinnacle cultivators. Given your beast taming capability, you could be considered as one of the top of the younger generation. However, Wei Youdao, Jiang Nanping, and the rest of us have already achieved a breakthrough since then. If this is all you have, I advise you to leave quietly now so that you don't make a mockery of yourself!"

Fang Jin looked at Beast Tamer Luo indifferently.

"You..." Beast Tamer Luo's face turned pale. "You mean that... Wei Youdao and the others have also achieved a breakthrough in their cultivation as well?"

There was a world of a difference between Zongshi realm pinnacle and Half-Zhizun. There were many who were stuck at Zongshi realm pinnacle for their entire life, unable to take the next step forward. How did all of them manage to achieve a breakthrough in the past two years?

"Not only so, Wei Youdao has even reached Zhizun realm primary stage!" Fang Jin replied.

"Zhizun realm primary stage?"

Beast Tamer Luo clenched his fists tightly, "So what if you are stronger? What we are competing on is our beast taming skill and understanding of savage beasts. Even if you're stronger, it doesn't mean that you can just beat a savage beast into submission..."

Dong!

Just as Beast Tamer Luo was refuting the other party's words, the ground suddenly quaked. A thunder-like chiming of a bell suddenly boomed.

"A bell? Crap, something huge is happening!"

Hall Master Feng's face suddenly warped.

Luo Tang and Fang Jin, who were in the midst of an argument, suddenly stopped their actions, and their eyes narrowed.

There were many savage beasts reared in the Beast Hall, and in order to avoid alarming them, quietness had always been upheld here. Unless something huge happened, the bell would never be chimed.

Its chiming meant that all beast tamers had to gather immediately to face whatever that was threatening the Beast Hall!

What could have happened for this bell to chime all of the sudden?

Dong dong dong!

The bell continued chiming.

"Quick, count the number of chimes!" Hall Master Feng urged.

The number of chimes represented the message the Beast Hall was trying to relay to the beast tamers.

Soon, when the chiming stopped, Luo Tang announced, "There was a total of... seven chimes!"

Fang Jin also quickly turned his gaze to Hall Master Feng. Even though they were beast tamers as well, such incidents were rare, and their knowledge of these old traditions couldn't match up to this old head of Xuanluo Mountain Range Beast Hall.

"Seven chimes, this is..."

Recalling the rules surrounding the chiming of the bell, Hall Master Feng's face paled. His body trembled vigorously as he muttered, "Someone is challenging the Ten Beasts Cage? How..."

How is that possible?"

"Ten Beasts Cage?"

Luo Tang and Fang Jin glanced at one another doubtfully.

This was their first time hearing of this term.

"Ten Beasts Cage is actually a long and narrow metal cage. Placed within it are ten savage beasts, and the further one advanced, the stronger the savage beasts become... To pass the trial, one has to travel from one end of the cage to the other end alone within two hours..."

Hall Master Feng's lips quivered.

"Ten savage beasts? Alone? This... Is it even possible?"

"It's the primal instinct of a savage beast to attack strangers on sight. If that wasn't the case, beast tamer wouldn't be such a respected occupation either. One has to travel from one end of the cage to the other end and face ten savage beasts within two hours?"

Luo Tang and Fang Jin exclaimed in shock. Even Beast Tamer Wang was dumbstruck.

Savage beasts had a skeptical nature, and they possessed an innate hostility toward humans. Without any unique means, one

would be attacked as soon as they came within the proximity of the savage beast. On top of that, the cage was narrow, so it was impossible to avoid contact altogether.

It was possible to subdue a savage beast within two hours, but to face ten of them consecutively? How was that possible?

Suddenly recalling a matter, Luo Tang hurriedly asked, "Right! How strong will be the savage beasts be?"

If the strength of the savage beasts was much weaker than the challenger, then even if there were ten of them and their strength rose progressively, it wouldn't be completely impossible to clear the trial.

"The first four savage beasts will be a small cultivation realm weaker than the challenger. The three afterward will be of the same cultivation as the challenger. The next two will be a small cultivation realm stronger than the challenger, and the final one will be... two small cultivation realms stronger than the challenger!"

Hall Master Feng's voice quivered as he spoke.

"What?"

The faces of the other three immediately turned ghastly pale.

As beast tamers, they were well aware of how fearsome savage

beasts were.

They possessed immense physiques and frightening brute strength; in the same cultivation realm, human cultivators were definitely no match for savage beasts. Yet, at the very end, one had to face a savage beast two small cultivation realms stronger than oneself?

Are you for real?

"There's no doubt about it, anyone who tries to challenge will surely die... Who would do something so foolish? What does one stand to gain out of this?"

Fang Jin couldn't help but ask.

Intrigued, Luo Tang and the others turned to look at Hall Master Feng as well.

It was impossible for someone to take such a risk if there was nothing to gain from it. This Ten Beasts Cage was clearly a death trap... Why would anyone even try to challenge it?

Surely it was seeking death?

"Of course there are benefits to it!"

Hall Master clenched his fists so tightly that his nails were

sinking into his flesh, "Anyone to succeeds will be bestowed with a drop of...

"Spirit beast blood essence!"

Chapter 416: Who Is It?

"What?"

Luo Tang and Fang Jin's eyes immediately reddened in agitation.

Spirit beasts possessed strength equivalent to Transcendent Mortal realm cultivators, and not only could their blood induce Bloodline Evolution in savage beasts, it could also temper a human's body, thus boosting one's strength.

This thing was much more valuable than spirit stones.

To think that the reward for challenging the Ten Beasts Cage was this!

However... even though they knew now that there was such a reward, it was impossible for them to challenge the Ten Beasts Cage.

No matter how valuable the reward was, it would be for naught if one lost one's life!

What was the use of a blood essence if one was dead?

"It's already difficult to triumph over a savage beast of the same cultivation realm as one, needless to say, challenging ten at once. Let's hurry over to see who... is so desperate to die." Luo Tang said,

gritting his teeth.

He was confident that he would emerge as the champion for the Beast Taming Competition, but even so, he didn't have the courage to face the ten savage beasts alone.

Who could it be?

To barge in just like that, even causing the chiming of the bells... Was he really tired of living?

"Let's go over then!"

Hall Master Feng nodded in agreement.

Beast Tamer Wang and Fang Jin were also curious to see who that brazen fellow was.

Thus, the group hurried toward the Beast Hall, and soon, they arrived at a vast open ground. There was an enormous crater around seven hundred to eight hundred meters wide right in front of them.

The crater was covered by an immense steel cage, and the ten savage beasts were segregated into several groups, prowling around the area they were placed in.

At this moment, a large group of people, attracted by the chiming

of the bell, was standing at the perimeter of the crater, looking at the situation in the cage below. Their eyebrows and mouths were twitching in fear from that sight.

There were many talented beast tamers amidst the crowd, but the sight of so many powerful savage beasts still caused their hair to stand on end.

"And the final one is a Zhizun realm primary stage savage beast..."

"Even a Zhizun realm intermediate stage expert would find it hard to subdue it. This... How does he intend to clear the trial?"

"Judging from how the weakest savage beast in it is a Zongshi realm advanced stage... that means that the one challenging the Ten Beasts Cage is a Zongshi realm pinnacle cultivator! Is it Wei Youdao, Jiang Nanping, Ji Wuxin, Fang Jin, or Luo Tang? From what I know, their cultivation realms are around that level, and their beast taming capability is also up to par!"

"You must have been living under a rock! Jiang Nanping and the others have reached Half-Zhizun, and Wei Youdao even managed to achieve a breakthrough to Zhizun realm primary stage. It's not them!"

"Not them? Then who else could it be? Who would dare to challenge ten powerful savage beasts face on?"

...

The strength of the savage beasts had caused a huge commotion among the crowd.

The savage beast guarding the very end of the cage was a Zhizun realm savage beast... Facing it was truly a ticket to hell.

Who would be so reckless?

Does he not fear death, or is he tired of living?

"To throw away one's life for a drop of spirit beast blood essence, that fellow must have a screw loose!"

Luo Tang couldn't help but comment.

Spirit beast blood essence is valuable, but nothing could be more valuable than one's life.

To disregard his life and challenge this hopeless trial... Has he gone mad?

"I know nearly all of the famous Zongshi realm pinnacle beast tamers in vicinity of Xuanyuan Kingdom... Who could it be? From what I remember, none of them are this irrational though?" Fang Jin's eyebrows knitted tightly together in contemplation.

Judging from the strength of the savage beast, it couldn't be Wei Youdao and the others. But other than them, who could possess the capability to challenge this Ten Beasts Cage?

Furthermore, even if it was that bunch, they probably wouldn't dare to take on this seemingly hopeless trial!

...

"Challenging the Ten Beasts Cage? He sure is brazen! He's probably tired of living, and he just wants to make a name for himself before his death!"

Amidst the crowd, a young man crossed his arms and glanced at the cage below with slight disdain in his eyes.

It was the genius who induced fear in Luo Tang and the others, Wei Youdao!

"Indeed. I've seen many of such people. Now, the only thing I'm curious about is whether he can even pass the first stage!"

Another person standing beside him harrumphed.

Another famous genius of Xuanyuan Kingdom, Jiang Nanping.

The two geniuses were as though two radiant stars among the crowd, and privately, they were good friends as well.

Upon hearing that someone wanted to challenge the Ten Beasts Cage, they immediately hurried over.

They wanted to see who possessed such courage.

As for whether that person could pass the trial or not, they thought that it was a ridiculous question.

Putting aside the Zhizun realm savage beast at the very end which was two small cultivation realms stronger than the challenger, just in the very first stage, the challenger had to face four savage beasts which were only one small cultivation realm weaker than him. This, in itself, was already a hopeless cause.

"The first stage consists of four Zongshi realm advanced stage Whirlwind Wolves! This savage beast moves extremely fast, and they're adept at coordinating with one another in a battle. It is already a difficult feat for a Zongshi realm pinnacle to subdue one. With four of them... They could probably even defeat an average Half-Zhizun cultivator. Zongshi realm pinnacle? Hehe, you must be dreaming!"

Wei Youdao shook his head.

"Indeed. That fellow will be torn to shreds in this stage!"

Jiang Nanping shook his head as well.

"He's asking for it anyway. Before challenging the Ten Beasts Cage, one has to sign a life-and-death agreement absolving anyone of blame if the challenger were to die in the midst of the trial. Even if he were to die, it would only be his own fault!"

Wei Youdao harrumphed coldly. Just as he was about to continue speaking, he suddenly caught sight of something and said, "He's out!"

Hearing his words, the crowd immediately turned their gazes onto the field below, and they saw a young man slowly walking toward the first stage of the Ten Beasts Cage.

"This fellow looks extremely young, it can't be that he's under twenty..."

"He's indeed young. To be able to reach Zongshi realm pinnacle at such an age, he must be incredibly talented. Why would he be in such a rush to seek death?"

Upon seeing the appearance of the figure below, the crowd was taken aback.

"Brother Wei, do you recognize him?"

Jiang Nanping was also stunned.

He knew all of the geniuses in the vicinity of Xuanyuan Kingdom, but he had never seen this fellow before.

"I've never seen him before!" Wei Youdao shook his head.

"To challenge the Ten Beasts Cage at such a young age, do you think that he has some ace up his sleeves?"

Jiang Nanping frowned.

"Ace up his sleeves? The Ten Beasts Cage has been here for more than a thousand years already, but no one has succeeded in clearing it before. No matter how many aces he has up his sleeve, it is impossible for him to succeed. He's probably just another brat who is trying too hard to impress others!" Wei Youdao waved his hands nonchalantly.

"You're right. In the thousand years since the Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall is set up, countless geniuses have challenged the Ten Beasts Cage, but no one has succeeded before. This unknown fellow is probably just trying to earn some fame." Jiang Nanping expressed his approval of the other party's view. "I wonder, by the end of this trial, will he still have a breath in him to enjoy his fame..."

...

"I-I-It's... him?"

"How could it be him? Is he mad?"

Contrary to the crowd's doubtful gazes, upon seeing the figure, Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang's faces immediately warped, and they nearly bit off their tongues from shock.

"You two know him?" Surprised, Luo Tang turned his gaze over.

"He's... the person I often speak of... Beast Tamer Zhang!"

Biting his tongue tightly and confirming that he wasn't dreaming, Hall Master Feng fell into a daze.

He was wondering what kind of incredible figure would challenge this impossible Ten Beasts Cage, and never in his dreams did he expect that it would be that youngster he just met a month ago... Zhang Xuan!

Didn't this fellow head to Tianwu Kingdom?

Why was he here?

Furthermore... Challenging the Ten Beasts Cage?

Didn't he know how dangerous it was?

Furthermore... Wasn't he at Tongxuan realm pinnacle? When did he reach Zongshi realm pinnacle?

Many doubts surfaced in Hall Master Feng's mind, jamming up his head, leaving him frenzied.

The heck, what in the world was going on?

"He's Zhang Xuan?"

Luo Tang froze for a moment before sneering coldly, "You all spoke of him as though he was some kind of deity. I thought that he would be some formidable figure... To think that he's just an ignorant brat!"

Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang had praised Zhang Xuan before him innumerable times, and this had left the proud him displeased.

Even so, to be complimented like that by the two elders of the Beast Hall, Luo Tang thought that he would be a truly formidable figure. Yet, the other party turned out to be an ignorant brat who would charge mindlessly into the Ten Beasts Cage.

Genius? Pui!

Challenging the Ten Beasts Cage, you sure know how to overestimate yourself. I will watch you be torn apart by the savage beasts later on...

Thinking so, disdain slowly appeared in his eyes.

"Genius? You mean a genius at courting death, right?" Hearing the conversation between them, Fang Jin sneered.

No matter how proud a genius was, they knew their limits. To challenge the Ten Beasts Cage for a drop of spirit beast blood essence that one couldn't obtain, that was an absolutely idiotic decision.

...

"Zhang Xuan, be careful..."

From above, Mo Yu, Zhao Ya, and the others gazed at the situation anxiously.

Mo Yu had been intrigued by how Zhang Xuan intended to raise his cultivation by coming to the Beast Hall. Upon hearing that he was going to challenge the Ten Beasts Cage, she immediately came to a realization... spirit beast blood essence!

However... Even if the spirit beast blood essence could augment one's strength, was it worth going through such risk just for it?

There are ten savage beasts, and every single one of them can easily slaughter a cultivator. Even if you manage to pass the first two stages through your extraordinary beast taming capability, what about the ones afterward?

Half-Zhizun savage beasts and a Zhizun realm primary stage savage beast... This was a line up that even a Zhizun realm intermediate stage cultivator would be unwilling to face.

"Teacher will surely... be fine!" Zhao Ya said.

She possessed absolute trust in her teacher, but the dangerous sight before her still left her worried.

"He should be fine..."

Mo Yu nodded as well, but it seemed as though she was convincing herself instead.

...

In contrast to the disdain and tense expression of those above, Zhang Xuan seemed completely relaxed.

To exact his vengeance, Zhang Xuan would have to grow stronger. Even if he were to gather a sufficient quantity of Zhizun realm cultivation technique to form a complete Zhizun realm Heaven's Path Divine Art, he would require a huge number of spirit stones to fuel his cultivation. As such, there was only one way left for him to grow stronger swiftly... Spirit beast blood essence!

As long as he had a sufficient quantity of it, through his Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan, he would be able to temper his physical

body to reach Zhizun realm pinnacle in the shortest possible time.

Spirit beast blood essence was incomparably valuable, so it was unlikely for Beast Halls to sell it to outsiders. Besides, even if it was up for sales, Zhang Xuan couldn't afford it anyway. Given his current strength, he couldn't snatch it by brute force either. Thus, the only path left before him was to challenge the Ten Beasts Cage.

According to the books, as long as he succeeded, he would be given a droplet of spirit beast blood essence.

Hu!

Breathing out a mouthful of turbid gas, Zhang Xuan glanced at the four Whirlwind Wolves of the first stage and smiled faintly.

"Come on!"

At which, he walked forward to the four ferocious wolves.

...

"He's charging straight in?"

"Is that fellow trying to charge through via brute force?"

"There must be something wrong with his head! One should use

their beast taming capability along with their strength to challenge the Ten Beasts Cage. He should at least throw out some food or something to win the other party's goodwill before trying anything. Wouldn't he incur their anger by charging straight in?"

"He's doomed. The Whirlwind Wolves have already been provoked..."

...

The Ten Beasts Cage wasn't just about one's battling prowess. After all, it was impossible for one to defeat so many powerful savage beasts within two hours!

The standard way was to use beast taming means to get on good terms with the savage beasts so as to pass through their area peacefully.

Yet, without even saying anything, this fellow charged straight in as though a fool.

Aren't you inviting the Whirlwind Wolves to tear you apart?

Chapter 417: The Cute Whirlwind Wolves

"Fool!" Wei Youdao harrumphed coldly in disdain.

Those were Whirlwind Wolves, one of the most aggressive savage beasts in the forests. Even though they only possessed a cultivation of Zongshi realm advanced stage, in a practical battle, even Half-Zhizun cultivators had to be wary.

Yet, this fool actually charged in without any preparation... You must be joking!

"Whirlwind Wolves fancy the meat of Flowing Wave Beast. If one were to barbecue the meat and offer it to them, one could easily earn their goodwill. But of course, that isn't sufficient to tame a Whirlwind Wolf. It would require at least two to three additional years of hard work to do so... For this fellow to charge in without any preparations, it can't be that he intends to face them straight on?"

Jiang Nanping's mouth widened in astonishment, "How can there be such a foolish person in the world? Could it be that... he isn't a beast tamer?"

No matter how much strength one possessed, or how much zhenqi one harnessed in one's body, it was impossible for one to barge through the trial consisting of ten powerful savage beasts using brute force. One had to utilize all kinds of beast taming methods and win the other party's goodwill so as to keep it from attacking one.

To charge straight in without any preparatory work...

There must be something wrong with his head!

No sane beast tamer would do this!

"If he's truly a beast tamer, then he's a shame to all beast tamers in the world!" Wei Youdao harrumphed coldly.

"That's right!" Jiang Nanping nodded.

No rational beast tamer in the world would commit such foolishness.

"Let's not talk about him. Brother Wei, how would you get past this stage?" Disregarding that mad fellow, Jiang Nanping asked curiously.

As geniuses, the both of them were rivals. However, at the same time, they were also learning from one another and improving together.

"Me?"

Wei Youdao's mouth curled up, and a dazzling smile surfaced on his dashing face. "Simple, I'd offer them the barbecued meat of a Flowing Wave Beast and the spring water from the Turquoise

Clarity Mountain. After which, I'd defeat the strongest one of the lot in the fastest time possible!"

Hearing the other party's solution, Jiang Nanping couldn't help but clap his hands in praise. "Brother Wei is indeed incredible! The Flowing Wave Beast and water from the Turquoise Clarity Mountain are the favorites of the Whirlwind Wolves. Using these two things to win their fancy before striking down on one of them violently... The most attractive carrot and the most painful stick! They'd surely lose their fighting will swiftly. Brilliant, that is truly brilliant!"

"Hehe... No matter how united savage beasts are, they're only beasts. One just has to divide them and make them lose their fighting will. The first stage actually isn't too difficult!"

After which, Wei Youdai turned to Jiang Nanping and asked, "What about you, Brother Jiang? How will you deal with this situation?"

"Me?" Jiang Nanping raised his right hand and pointed to the cage valiantly. "My method is different from that of Brother Wei. I'd... I'd... The heck! What is going on? How is this possible?"

Jiang Nanping was about to explain the idea he had in mind to the other party when his eyes narrowed. Gradually, his face paled, and he nearly lost his balance and fell down from shock.

"What's wrong?"

Seeing his good friend losing his composure, going to the extent of even spouting vulgarities, Wei Youdao frowned. He also turned his gaze to the cage below.

With a single look, his body trembled, and he nearly spurted a mouthful of blood.

"Thi-this... Are my eyes playing tricks on me?"

The duo stared at one another silently.

...

"Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang, you two must be old! I told you all that Zhang Xuan couldn't be as incredible as you all put him out to be, but you all just wouldn't listen to me. See what's happening now?"

Upon seeing Zhang Xuan diving into the group of Whirlwind Wolves, Luo Tang glanced at the two elders behind him and shook his head.

What in the world were you all thinking?

Do you think that this goof can represent the Xuanluo Mountain Range Beast Hall in this competition?

And that he is superior to me?

You must be pulling my leg!

"It's fortunate you two didn't bring him here. Otherwise, it'd only be embarrassing!"

Luo Tang spoke with a concerned tone, but smugness hung on the corners of his lips.

Those two old fogeys actually compared him with this fool? They must be blind!

"Actually, I don't mean to blame you all by saying these words. I just hope that you all won't be deceived by the lies of despicable people..."

Halfway through his words, Luo Tang suddenly felt someone tugging on his sleeve.

"What?"

Luo Tang frowned. Turning around, he saw Fang Jin staring at him with a dazed expression. Fear and shock reflected in his eyes.

"Brother Fang..."

Luo Tang was taken aback. He was just about to ask about it when he caught sight of the scene below with his peripheral vision.

In that instant, it felt as though his head exploded, and tears threatened to spill from his eyes.

What was... this situation?

In the cage below, the ferocious and valiant Whirlwind Wolves were standing before the young man with a fawning look. They rubbed their heads ceaselessly on the pants of the other party and licked him throughout... On top of that, they were wagging their tails so fast that it almost looked like a propeller, and it looked as though it was going to be shaken off at any time now.

They were not attacking him... but fawning over him?

You all are the Conquerors of the Forest, the fearsome Whirlwind Wolves, not pugs...

Why in the world are you all acting cute?

What are you all up to?

"This is... Complete Submission? It's offering to form a contract with him?"

Swallowing a mouthful of saliva, Luo Tang spoke with a hoarse voice.

It couldn't be any clearer to him that the Whirlwind Wolves, who

were feared as the Conquerors of the Forest, were fawning on Zhang Xuan, hoping that the other party would take them in as his tamed beast!

Weren't Whirlwind Wolves proud animals who refused to associate themselves with humans? Didn't taming them take several years of relentless effort?

When did they become like dogs, stretching out their tongue and shaking their tails... waiting for someone to tame them? On top of that... Complete Submission?

"What in the world happened?"

Unable to comprehend the sight before him, Luo Tang turned to look at Fang Jin.

He was too busy lecturing Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang a moment ago, so he didn't pay careful attention. He didn't think that such a huge turnaround would occur in a blink of an eye. The situation at this instant left him completely baffled.

"That... Beast Tamer Zhang rushed into the wolves, and after pummeling them for a moment, it just... just... turned out like this!"

Fang Jin was also on the verge of tears. He tried to explain the situation, but he realized that he had no idea what had just happened either.

He had seen the entire proceeding clearly, but yet... despite seeing everything, he found himself even more confused than Luo Tang.

The ferocious disposition of the Whirlwind Wolves a moment ago wasn't just a facade. Given his eye of discernment, he could at least tell this much...

Yet, why did they suddenly change their attitudes after getting beaten up?

He had once accompanied an elder in the Beast Hall to capture a Whirlwind Wolf, and he had seen its callous personality for himself. Sometimes, it would even launch a lethal assault on a person right after it was fed with delicacies!

Otherwise, it wouldn't have earned the nickname 'Ingrate Wolf'.

It was one of the hardest savage beasts to tame. Yet, it was reduced to such a state right after a round of beating...

Can you all be any more shameless?

Can you all be any more embarrassing than this?

"They became like that right after a pummeling?"

Luo Tang was also dumbfounded. He was about to enquire more about it when Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang spoke in agitation.

"It's Beast Tamer Zhang's unique technique, [Beast Pummeling Taming Method]!"

"Indeed! To think that he would use it here. No matter how I look at it, I can't help but be impressed!"

"Beast pummeling taming method?"

Luo Tang and Fang Jin stared at the duo in confusion.

"Un, beast pummeling taming method is a unique technique that Beast Tamer Zhang's teacher came up with. As long as a savage beast is beaten up using this technique, it would immediately submit to one. Back then, during the beast tamer examination, he used this technique to tame a Half-Zongshi Viridescent Eagle on the spot."

Seeing incomprehension in the eyes of the two, Hall Master Feng explained.

Getting a savage beast to submit through beating it?

What the heck?

Shouldn't beating savage beasts trigger the rebellious streak in them?

To submit after a pummeling...

How in the world could there be such a bizarre beast taming technique in the world? Why did it feel as though they were dreaming?

The duo only felt thunder rumbling by their ears, and their head was about to convulse from shock.

...

"Complete Submission... He actually tamed those Whirlwind Wolves in just a few breaths?"

At this moment, Wei Youdao and Jiang Nanping had finally recovered from their immense shock from the sight, and a dazed look appeared on their faces.

"Even though Whirlwind Wolves are only Zongshi realm advanced stage savage beasts, they possessed incredible speed and outstanding offensive ability. They'd definitely boost one's fighting prowess significantly. That fellow is truly lucky..."

Jiang Nanping commented in envy.

He thought that given how rash this fellow was, he would definitely be torn to shreds by the fangs of the Whirlwind Wolves. Yet, not only was he fine, he even managed to tame four Whirlwind Wolves at a single go...

"Indeed. I don't know what kind of secret technique he used to tame those Whirlwind Wolves, but it's an extremely fortunate affair for a beast tamer to have a savage beast willingly pledge its servitude to him. That fellow must be overflowing with joy at this moment..." Wei Youdao said.

There were different stages to the taming of a beast: Inceptive Taming, Advanced Taming, and Complete Submission.

Only upon Complete Submission would a savage beast willingly sign a contract and serve one. This wasn't just a show of acknowledgement by a savage beast, this was also a display of the capability of a beast tamer.

That fellow must be feeling proud at how he managed to get the proud Whirlwind Wolves lower their heads in such a short period of time!

Even if he failed the later stages, he would have already succeeded in making a name for himself...

"Indeed!"

Awed, the duo glanced downward to see the contract forming

between the young man and the four savage beasts, but contrary to their expectation, the young man kicked them away impatiently.

"Scram to the side, don't cause me trouble here!"

Peng peng peng peng!

Four sorrowful cries sounded as the Whirlwind Wolves were kicked to the side. Then, the young man started walking with large strides over to the next stage.

Wuu wuu wuu wuu!

Despite being kicked, not only did the Whirlwind Wolves not charge forward to attack Zhang Xuan out of anger, they even laid on the ground motionless, not daring to make a single move as they watched the other party off with gazes mixed with desire and frustration.

"The heck!"

Upon seeing this sight, all of the spectators were dumbfounded.

Chapter 418: Tiger Head Beast

Several hundred meters away from the Ten Beasts Cages stood a tall tower.

Two elders were standing by the windows with an incredulous look on their faces.

They were Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall's Hall Master Xie Jiuchen and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing.

And that Wei Youdao was the grandson of this Grand Elder.

When Zhang Xuan arrived at the Beast Hall, the first thing he did was to look for these two. To enter the Ten Beasts Cage, he needed the permission of these two.

"Did you see his movements clearly?" Xie Jiuchen asked in disbelief.

"I... only saw him beating up the Whirlwind Wolves. Other than that... I am unable to see through anything else!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing's face reddened.

As a 3-star beast tamer, his cultivation had reached Zhizun realm pinnacle, granting him vision much sharper than ordinary cultivators... He should have been able to at least comprehend the trick behind the other party's actions, yet... just like anyone else, he was also completely baffled.

Just by thinking about it left him embarrassed.

"His movements were too fast, so it's normal that you were unable to see anything! If I'm not wrong, on top of the means of a beast tamer, he has also utilized some master teacher techniques!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen said with a grave face.

"Master teacher techniques?" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing asked doubtfully.

"Indeed. Even though it seemed as though he recklessly charged forward to attack those Whirlwind Wolves, every blow of his struck accurately on the meridians and acupoints of the other party. With just a few strikes, he managed to stimulate their cultivation, bringing their strength, which was capped by their bloodline, up to new heights!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen explained,

"This is similar to clearing a cultivator's meridians. After those strikes of his, even though there wasn't any visible difference to the Whirlwind Wolves, their cultivation has already grown significantly. Raising their own strength has always been a huge difficulty for savage beasts. Given how the other party is able to induce such a huge growth in their strength just through a few strikes, it's natural that the Whirlwind Wolves would submit willingly to him!"

"This..." Wei Yuqing widened his eyes in shock.

Even though the other party had put it simply, the difficulty in

doing so was so great that it could be said to be impossible.

Every single Whirlwind Wolf possessed a different constitution and maturity, so their physical conditions, as well as the location of their meridians and acupoints, would differ from one another. To identify them in an instant and strike on them accurately...

What kind of eyes did the other party possess?

How in the world did he do it?

Putting him aside, even 4-star master teachers would be hard-pressed to do so.

"Other than this, I can't think of any other possibilities!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's eyes shone in agitation. "That lad might be young, but he possesses top-notch talent for beast taming!"

"Indeed. Let's see how he'll pass the second stage!" Wei Yuqing nodded.

To be capable of executing techniques so profound that even 3-star beast tamers were unable to decipher them, that lad was indeed impressive.

"In the second stage, he'll have to face three Tiger Head Beast of the same cultivation realm as him."

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's face turned grim, "Different from Whirlwind Wolves, Tiger Head Beasts are solitary beasts, and they prefer to strike on their own. However, they possess formidable strength, and their bodies and claws are on the level of Phantom equipment. It wouldn't be wrong to say that... they possess invincible defense. Ordinary swords and spears can never hope to pierce through its skin!

"It'll be hard for him to use the same method from before and strike their acupoints and meridians."

"Indeed!" Grand Master Wei Yuqing nodded in agreement.

As a 3-star beast tamer, he could deduce that much. Even though the four Whirlwind Wolves were fearsome adversaries, those who dared to challenge the Ten Beasts Cage were not ordinary beast tamers. At least eight to nine of the challengers would manage to get past the first stage.

The true test... only started from here onward!

Even though savage beasts possess superior physique, speed, and defense to cultivators of the same level, humans possessed an advantage in their intelligence and the heritage of battle techniques.

As long as one learned several formidable battle techniques, with one's superior cultivation, it wasn't impossible to subdue four Whirlwind Wolves.

However... Subduing three savage beasts of the same cultivation realm as one was clearly much harder.

Furthermore, the Tiger Head Beast was adept at individual brawling, and its defense was invincible among those of the same cultivation realm.

It was no joke to say that ten out of ten challengers would fail in this stage, ending up dead or crippled.

"Prepare to save him as soon as it seems like he's in danger. Such talent is rare in the Beast Hall!"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen felt that it was a pity to see such a talent fall here, so he passed on a command.

"Un!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing nodded.

Given that even he was unable to see through the beast taming technique that the other party used, it was likely that this Zhang Xuan either had an unbelievably formidable teacher or... he possessed an eye of discernment and talent far surpassing that of others.

Regardless of which one it was, the Beast Hall would have to protect him with all its might.

"Look, it's starting..."

In the midst of the conversation between the duo, Zhang Xuan was already right before the three Tiger Head Beasts, and it seemed as though a battle would trigger at any moment now.

"Tiger Head Beasts possess a powerful physique and have a solitary and skeptical personality. It won't be as easy to tame as the Whirlwind Wolves!"

Standing before the three massive gigantic beasts that resembled tigers, its information surfaced in Zhang Xuan's head.

Mature Tiger Head Beasts could grow up to a height of three meters and a length of five meters. Given its impenetrable defense and massive physique, it already emanated a formidable pressure to face one, so one can only imagine the pressure of fighting three of them simultaneously.

Even without resorting to any techniques, just its charge would be sufficient to destroy an ordinary cultivator.

However, all of this meant nothing to Zhang Xuan.

Even though Zhang Xuan's cultivation was still stuck at Zongshi realm pinnacle, his true fighting prowess was already equivalent to that of a Zhizun realm intermediate stage expert. Three Tiger Head Beasts truly meant nothing much to him.

With a thought, lines of insight surfaced in Zhang Xuan's

narrowed eyes.

The form of the three gigantic Tiger Head Beasts immediately changed. The layout of their muscle, the arrangement of their bones, the pathways of their meridians, the faults in their physique... All of them suddenly appeared right before Zhang Xuan's eyes.

Eye of Insight!

After the Soul Tempering of a Mentor's Calligraphy, not only was Zhang Xuan able to peer into the flaws of those a small cultivation realm stronger than him, the number of flaws he could see had also increased significantly.

These three Tiger Head Beasts may seem imposing to the others, but all he could see were flaws all over them.

"Let's begin then, I'll end this in an instant! So what if they're difficult to tame? My goal isn't to tame them anyway!"

With a slight smile, Zhang Xuan stepped forward.

His final goal was to pass the Ten Beasts Cage, not to tame the savage beasts in it.

Rather, even if he managed to tame them and they became attached to him, that would become troublesome.

Roar!

He took a step forward, and with this, he stepped into the territory of the Tiger Head Beasts. With a ferocious roar, the three massive figures immediately charged forward and surrounded him.

"Tiger Head Beasts possess outstanding defense. It'll probably be a difficult fight..."

Wei Youdao narrowed his eyes.

"Indeed!" Jiang Nanping nodded in agreement. "If he can break through the other party's defense, he might still stand a chance. Otherwise, he's doomed..."

Peng peng peng peng!

Just as the duo was talking, the young man below began exchanging blows with the three gigantic beasts.

"He... Why did he strike the Tiger Head Beast's abdomen? Is he insane?" Jiang Nanping's face warped in shock.

"Different from other savage beasts, the abdomen is where its defense is the strongest. It often intentionally exposes it to lure others to attack it so as to create a momentary lapse in the other

party's defense to strike..."

Wei Youdao's complexion looked awful as well.

Most savage beasts were unable to train their abdomen, so it was usually their weak spot. However... the Tiger Head Beast was different.

It had an additional bone at its abdomen, granting it unimaginable resilience.

This was precisely the reason why it often used it to bait cultivators to attack it. To strike at it, one would have to get into the range of the Tiger Head Beast's offense. By then, wouldn't it be free to do as it pleased?

Given how the youngster managed to tame the Whirlwind Wolves so swiftly, the other party should have an in-depth understanding of the habits and properties of savage beasts. How did he make such a low-level mistake?

Not only was striking the abdomen ineffective, one would be doomed the moment the Tiger Head Beast counterattacks!

"Look, the Tiger Head Beast is about to retaliate..."

While the duo was frowning at that sight, the man and the beast below had already come into contact with one another.

Upon seeing the fellow strike its abdomen, the Tiger Head Beast's eyes glowed in excitement. Its thick tail immediately reached forward to pull the young man to him.

Yet, before its tail could reach the other party, the latter's fist had already struck its abdomen.

Disdain and mock flashed across its eyes when a dull thud suddenly sounded.

Peng!

Immense force flowed through the other party's arm onto its body.

The mock on its face froze, and its eyes widened in shock. Its tongue fell out of its mouth, and saliva started dripping uncontrollably down the corners of its mouth.

Sou!

The five-meter long gigantic tiger body flew backward and struck the cage.

Peng!

The figure of a massive tiger was imprinted on the steel cage.

Huala!

Then, falling from the sky onto the ground, a huge storm of dust rose. The Tiger Head Beast struggled, and large mouthfuls of vomit spilled from its mouth. It tried to get back up, but excruciating pain struck its abdomen, rendering it completely immobile.

"What?"

"He struck at the point where the Tiger Head Beast's defense is the strongest, and he still rendered it powerless?"

"This... This..."

In an instant, the spectators standing in the perimeter of the cage fell silent.

The Tiger Head Beast possessed incredible defense. Under normal circumstances, the fist of a cultivator felt nothing more like an itch to it. Yet, to nearly kill it with a single blow...

How did the other party do it?

Are you sure that it is a fist, and not the leg of an elephant?

"It's Heaven's Path Fist Art!"

Among the crowd, Liu Yang tightened his fists and exclaimed with reddened eyes.

This was the Heaven's Path Fist Art that teacher imparted to him. Even though the movements were the exact same as his, there was a world of difference between the might of his teacher's punch and his own.

Given how the Zongshi realm pinnacle Tiger Head Beast was rendered powerless with a single blow, even a Zhizun realm primary stage cultivator would be unable to withstand the might of that fist!

"Looks like I should devote more effort to it in the future..." Liu Yang made up his mind.

"Roar..."

Oblivious to the shock among the crowd, after sending the first Tiger Head Beast flying, Zhang Xuan turned to the remaining two.

Upon meeting his gaze, the edges of the lips of the other two gigantic fellows immediately twitched, and they hurriedly retreated backward.

They didn't possess the intelligence of a human, but they were no fools either.

The one who was sent flying was the strongest of them, but... at the moment, it looked as though it might just breathe its last at any moment now. Since that was the case, how could they possibly withstand that strike?

"Don't be scared. Let me hit you once, and we can end this here. Otherwise, if you all don't fall, I won't be able to proceed on with the trial..."

Seeing the savage beast renowned for its ferociousness backing away from fear, Zhang Xuan was speechless. He clenched his fists and beckoned them forward.

Padah! Padah!

As soon as Zhang Xuan spoke those words, the sound of two heavy objects falling to the ground suddenly echoed. Then, they saw the two imposing Tiger Head Beast falling to the ground at the same moment with their four legs facing the sky. Their tongues were stuck out, and saliva flowed continuously out of their mouths.

"..." Zhang Xuan

"..." The crowd.

Chapter 419: Seven Meridians Vicious Bear

"What's going on?"

"Are the two Tiger Head Beasts sick?"

"Sick my head! Can't you tell? It's obvious that they're intimidated..."

"After the other party said that 'if you all don't fall, I won't be able to proceed on with the trial', those two fellows immediately dropped from fright..."

After a moment of silence, an uproar burst in the area.

They had seen savage beasts fighting resolutely against an opponent to their last breath.

They had seen arrogant savage beasts who disregarded all that came their way...

But they had never seen a savage beast who played dead even before the fight began...

How scared are you both of that fellow?

"Without making a move, he made the ferocious Tiger Head Beast so scared that they chose to play dead?"

Luo Tang and Fang Jin nearly bit their own tongues.

Wasn't this way too exaggerated?

Those were Tiger Head Beasts, incomparably ferocious animals! They were existences who dared to bare their fangs against Zhizun realm experts! Yet, after witnessing a single punch, they immediately fell to the ground and allowed saliva to trickle from their lips...

Can you all be any more shameless than that?

What ever happened to the pride of a savage beast?

The backbone of the Dictator of the Forest?

The disposition of a Zongshi realm pinnacle?

Luo Tang and the others felt as though their worldly horizons were being pushed to new boundaries.

Ten minutes ago, they prided themselves on being invincible in the art of beast taming in Xuanyuan Kingdom. However, upon seeing Zhang Xuan, they realized how insignificant they were.

Despite inducing Complete Submission among a group of Whirlwind Wolves within a few breaths, that fellow... kicked them

away as though they were nothing.

Alright, you might not necessarily need them, so I will grudgingly overlook it. But... to scare a Tiger Head Beast into playing dead with a single word, isn't that way too exaggerated?

"If it were me... What would happen?"

Putting himself in the other party's situation, Luo Tang immediately burst into tears.

If he was the one facing the three Tiger Head Beasts, he would probably immediately fall to the ground and play dead upon hearing the other party's howl...

Before this, he thought that Hall Master Feng and the others were going overboard praising this fellow. However, only now did he know that there was a world of a difference between this fellow and him.

"I won't be able to do so either..." Fang Jin shook his head with a bitter smile.

Even as a Half-Zhizun expert, he didn't stand a chance against three Tiger Head Beasts at once. Under such circumstances, the best he could do was to run as far as he could. Subduing and taming it were completely out of question.

...

"The Tiger Head Beast's defense is strongest at its abdomen, but it's also where its strength originates from. Through striking at that spot with pure brute strength, that lad instantaneously destroyed its biological structure, resulting in its nausea and powerless!"

Seeing that sight, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen widened his mouth in shock. It took him a long moment before he recovered. "After seeing the sight, the two remaining Tiger Head Beasts knew that the same plight would befall them if they were to be struck..."

"Once a savage beast loses its fighting prowess, it would be no different from dead. No matter how foolish they might be, it was clear what they should do!"

The primal instincts of a savage beast also taught them to avoid the strong. When facing a being far stronger than itself, even the most arrogant savage beast would back down.

"Indeed. However... to achieve this, one needs to possess more than brute strength. Above that, one has to have a complete understanding of the physique of a Tiger Head Beast so as to instantaneously determine the point of weakness among the muscles, bones, and meridians amidst its huge abdomen before one can subdue it with a single blow..."

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing was also stunned.

Those were Tiger Head Beasts! Even with his current strength, it

was still impossible for him to instill so much fear in them with a single blow that they would play dead!

This was no longer just a matter of possessing immense brute strength. Only those who possesses complete understanding of the Tiger Head Beast, its habits, attacking pattern, physique, and such were able to do so!

Only then would one be able to achieve such a feat so easily.

Was... Was he still a human?

For a 2-star beast tamer who wasn't in his twenties yet... How in the world did he do it?

"If I'm not wrong, he probably has a Tiger Head Beast as a tamed beast. After innumerable days and nights of companion, he managed to gain an in-depth understanding of the latter. Otherwise... it doesn't make sense at all!"

After thinking for a moment, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen eventually spoke up.

It was impossible for such knowledge to appear from nowhere. It was only through books and practical experience that one could gain complete understanding over something.

Back then, there was a painter in the capital who, in order to bring out the spirit within bamboo, planted bamboos all around

his house and observed them day after day. After twenty-seven years, he managed to produce a masterpiece and made a name for himself!

In order to better understand their tamed beast, some beast tamers would choose to accompany their tamed beast day and night. Some even went to the extent of mimicking their actions so as to learn more about their habits. Through this, they were able to create cultivation techniques that complemented their tamed beast, and they were also able to earn trust from their tamed beast as well.

Given that the other party was able to get the Tiger Head Beasts to admit defeat in an instant through means they were unable to think of, this could only mean that the other party's understanding of this savage beast had far surpassed them.

Most probably, he had put a lot of effort into the study of Tiger Head Beasts.

And to do so, it was likely that he had tamed one.

"Indeed!"

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing nodded in agreement. Then, he glanced at the cage, and worry surfaced in his eyes, "He might be able to pass this stage due to his deep understanding of the Tiger Head Beast, but the third stage won't be that easy!"

"For the third stage, he'll have to face the Half-Zhizun [Seven Meridians Vicious Bear]

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's complexion slowly turned grim, "This kind of savage beast is extremely rare, and it's nearly impossible to tame it. Thus, it's impossible for him to have prior knowledge of it!"

"More importantly, it possesses immense strength. Even though its cultivation is only at Half-Zhizun, it's very likely that its true strength has surpassed ten thousand ding!"

"Un. The Seven Meridians Vicious Bear only has seven meridians in its body, but it provides them with an advantage as well. To make up for the lacking quantity of meridians in its body, its meridians grew thicker, granting it with immense strength. If not for its slow movements, it would have been surely classified as a Zhizun realm savage beast!"

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing nodded.

The only reason why the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear was publicly acknowledged to be a Half-Zhizun realm savage beast was because of its lacking speed. However, in terms of strength, even Zhizun realm primary stage cultivators were unable to match up to it.

"In order to make up for the flaw of the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear, the area for the third stage of the Ten Beasts Cage is made narrower. This way, its limited speed wouldn't become too much

of a problem, and the challenger won't be able to circumvent it. Given the strength of the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear, it'll be difficult for that lad to get by using the two techniques he used for the previous two stages!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen said.

Even though Zhang Xuan had passed the first two stages easily, there was a possibility that he might have prepared specially for them in advance.

If he had studied the flaws of the two savage beasts intensely beforehand, it wouldn't be too difficult for him to pass the two stages.

But the third stage was different. Due to the narrow area, it would be difficult for one to escape from the assault of the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear. On top of that, the flaw of the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear was on its back, and given the limited area, it was impossible for one to sneak to its back and strike it. Thus, one would be forced to face it straight on.

It was one thing if Zhang Xuan's cultivation equaled with it. However, not only was the savage beast's cultivation one small realm higher than Zhang Xuan, he also had to face two at once...

The difficulty was unimaginable.

It was not an exaggeration to say that there was no hope of victory.

...

"Most probably... His challenge will come to an end here!"

Jiang Nanping's tightly clenched fists slowly released.

It was true that the other party had shocked him with his feat with the Tiger Head Beasts.

But the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear was different.

Given the narrow space, one could only face it in a battle of strength.

Without sufficient strength, losing... was inevitable.

From the battle between the young man with the Whirlwind Wolves, it was clear that he was more adept in swift movements. Such cultivators often lacked strength.

After all, it was impossible for one to be skilled in everything.

"Even a Zhizun realm primary stage cultivator would be unable to subdue a Seven Meridians Vicious Bear. He'll... surely be unable to withstand its attacks!"

Wei Youdao shared the same point of view.

If the second stage with the Tiger Head Beasts could be described as dangerous, then the third one with the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear would cause despair.

Even with its slow speed, it was impossible for a Zongshi realm pinnacle to triumph over it.

"Let's see what weapon he'll use!" Jiang Nanping commented.

Due to the overwhelming difficulty of the third stage, challengers were permitted to use their choice weapon from a selection provided by the Beast Hall.

However, due to the confined space, one had to choose carefully. If the weapon was too long, one would not be able to move freely, and it would become a burden instead. On the other hand, if it was too short, it would be difficult to deal significant damage to the massive body of the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear, thus rendering it useless.

If one didn't choose wisely, it would almost be equivalent to forfeiting.

"He's already in front of the weapon rack. I guess he'll probably use a hammer or something similar. It allows him to launch powerful blows, and it is easy to use as well."

"I think it should be a sharp dagger or something of the sort. It'll

be much easier to use them..."

The duo stared fixedly at the young man below as they spoke their conjectures. However, before they could finish their words, the sight below caused them to freeze.

The youngster below simply walked past the weapon rack as though he didn't see it.

"He didn't choose anything? What does this mean? It can't be that... he intends to face the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear barehanded?"

"Barehanded? Is that fellow mad?"

The Seven Meridians Vicious Bear was known for his immense strength. Through the skillful utilization of one's weapon, one might still stand a chance...

But barehanded, how could he possibly win?

This was no different from smashing an egg on a stone! This was courting death!

"It's beginning... It's too late to choose a weapon now..."

Just as the duo were shocked, the young man below had already walked into the attacking radius of the two Seven Meridians

Vicious Bear.

Roar! Roar!

Two massive figures blocking the narrow passageway of the cage entirely roared furiously as they stared at the young man in savagery.

As though they would tear him apart.

"Not only does the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear possess immense strength, its defense is also top-notch. Under such circumstances, the narrow space is truly advantageous to it... This stage is a little tricky!" Zhang Xuan muttered as he looked ahead.

There was a lot of information on the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear within the books that he assimilated to his head, and thus, he knew how fearsome and powerful these two fellows were.

If he hadn't cultivated the Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan, he would surely find it difficult to face them. But now, they didn't mean much to him.

As for weapons...

The spear art, sword art, and saber art that Zhang Xuan learned were way too sharp and powerful. If he were to accidentally kill the other party in the midst of the battle, wouldn't the Beast Hall come after him?

Even in Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall, Half-Zhizun savage beasts were rare.

"Alright, I should hurry up. I still want to gather a few more drops of spirit beast blood essence..."

Shaking his head, Zhang Xuan dashed forward. In the blink of an eye, he was already standing right before a Seven Meridians Vicious Bear. Then, with both of his hands, he grabbed the arm of one of the massive fellows.

"Rise!"

Howling furiously, Zhang Xuan flipped it over.

"..."

"What's this fighting method?"

Wei Youdao, Jiang Nanping, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing, and the others were dumbfounded by the sight.

Chapter 420: I Want to Challenge Ten Beasts Cage (1)

"Roar? Roar? Roar?"

The Seven Meridians Vicious Bear was dumbstruck as well.

It thought that dealing with a Zongshi realm cultivator would be a walk in a park, but before it could even process what was going on, the fellow had already rushed up to him and flipped him over.

"What are you roaring for?"

The voice of a young man echoed before the head of the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear smashed onto the metal cage.

Peng peng peng peng!

Its massive body kept coming into intimate contact with the metal cage; sometimes, it would be the left side of his head, sometimes it would be the right side. The continuous smashing left its head spinning, and it was on the verge of spurting blood.

The other Seven Meridians Vicious Bear clearly didn't expect this fellow to be so ferocious and powerful, bashing its companion around easily. It immediately prepared to charge forward to assist its companion.

"You wish to save it? Here you go!"

Before the other bear could charge up to the young man, a light chuckle sounded, and a massive shadow came flying straight toward it.

It didn't have any time to react before it was struck squarely in the face, and the two bears came crashing to the ground.

"Do you two admit defeat?"

With his hands placed in his pockets, Zhang Xuan casually walked over to the two light-headed massive beasts.

Roar!

The second Seven Meridians Vicious Bear bellowed once more, and prepared to counterattack. However, Zhang Xuan simply shook his head, grabbed its arm, and started smashing it against the metal cage.

Peng peng peng peng!

Large holes appeared on the ground and the metal cage.

Gathering all of its strength, the first Vicious Bear, whose head was still turning from Zhang Xuan's prior assault, weakly got to its feet, but at that moment, its companion, held by Zhang Xuan as

though a club, was sent flying straight into it.

Padah!

Not too long later, the two massive fellows finally caved in. They lay on the ground faint-headed, devoid of the strength to climb back up.

Challenging me in a contest of strength?

You must be jesting!

Having cultivated Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan, Zhang Xuan possessed a total strength of 15000 ding. No matter how strong those two fellows were, they didn't stand a chance against him.

"To render the Tiger Head Beast who is known for its outstanding defense powerless with a single fist, and throw around the Seven Meridians Vicious Bear who is known for its unparalleled strength so easily..."

"Is he still a human?"

"Is he really just a Zongshi realm pinnacle cultivator?"

...

The surroundings were completely silent.

Everyone thought that the other party must have a screw loose to challenge the Ten Beasts Cage, but at this moment, it couldn't be any clearer that he had the power to back it up!

What Whirlwind Wolves, Tiger Head Beasts, or Seven Meridians Vicious Bears...

Despite their fearsome reputation, they seemed no different from little chicks before him. They were sent flying about at his whim.

"His cultivation is really Zongshi realm pinnacle, just that... he seems to be using pure physical strength!"

It took a very long time before Hall Master Xie Jiuchen could shut his gaping mouth.

Previously, as the other party subdued his opponents swiftly through technique, he failed to notice it. But this time, the other party was clearly using strength beyond that of an ordinary Zongshi realm pinnacle, and there wasn't even the slightest zhenqi disturbance from him...

To think that on top of his understanding of savage beast and outstanding eye of discernment, that lad's strength would be at a fearsome level as well.

"It shouldn't be just his strength itself... Given how he was so able

to hold onto the Vicious Bear's arm so easily, he probably... used some technique as well!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing said.

"Indeed. Even though the Vicious Bear's movements are slow, it is still a Half-Zhizun savage beast, and it has adapted over time to make up for its flaws. To be able to render it unable to retaliate so easily, his grip probably isn't as simple as it seems. Most probably, he held onto the savage beast's acupoint to prevent it from exerting strength!"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen was already at a complete loss for words.

Under normal circumstances, even if one were to grab onto the arm of a Seven Meridians Vicious Bear, given the savage beast's massive physique and overwhelming strength, how could it possibly allow one to throw it around so easily?

Thus, it was highly possible that the lad had held onto the Vicious Bear's vitals with his grip.

This vital was probably something similar to the mingmen of human cultivators. Once grabbed, it would render it completely powerless.

"Hall master, do you think that it is possible that... he has been raising a Seven Meridians Vicious Bear?" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing asked.

Previously the hall master said that it was likely that the other

party had raised a Tiger Head Beast given his deep understanding of its physique.

Given how that lad was able to find the flaw on the Seven Meridian Vicious Beast so quickly as well... Could it be that he had been raising one as well?

"Cough cough..."

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's face turned red, and he nearly choked to death on his saliva.

It was common to for a beast tamer to rear a tamed beast at home, but a bunch?

It wasn't like the other party was operating a zoo. How could he possibly be rearing Whirlwind Wolves, Tiger Head Beasts... and now, a Seven Meridians Vicious Bear as well?

"He has passed through three stages already. Perhaps, this Zhang Xuan may become the first beast tamer in our Beast Hall to pass the Ten Beasts Cage!"

Knowing that continuing on the prior topic would just embarrass him, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen chuckled awkwardly and changed the topic.

There were people in the Beast Hall who challenged the Ten Beasts Cage before, but most of them couldn't even pass the second

stage. Yet, that lad was able to pass three stages as easily as though eating and drinking. Perhaps, he might be able to do the same for the fourth stage as well.

"Indeed, hall master. It seems like you'll have to prepare a set of spirit beast blood essence!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing chuckled.

The reward for a successful challenge of the Ten Beasts Cage was a drop of spirit beast blood essence. Given how easily the other party passed the prior stages, it was likely that he would succeed in a single go. By then, the Beast Hall would have to present the prize to him.

"Hehe!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen stroked his beard and chuckled. "If a beast tamer can pass the Ten Beasts Cage, that can only mean that the talents in our Beast Hall are becoming more and more formidable. It's just a drop of spirit beast blood essence, it's nothing much! Not only will I present it to him, I'll also announce that if any other geniuses were to pass the Ten Beasts Cage, they'll be entitled to the same prize as well, and perhaps even more than that!"

For the past thousand years, there hadn't been a single person who had passed Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall's Ten Beasts Cage. There were also very few successful challengers in the other Conferred Kingdom Beast Halls. With this record, he would be able to keep his head up high when meeting the other hall masters.

On top of that, he could also motivate the other geniuses to work harder. This matter was beneficial to the Beast Hall.

"Indeed!" Understanding this point, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing nodded.

Just as he was about to continue speaking, his gaze suddenly turned grim. "Look, he's about to challenge the final stage!"

At that moment, all of the spectators turned their gazes to the cage below.

After rendering the two Seven Meridians Vicious Bears helpless, Zhang Xuan continued to proceed forward, and before long, he reached the final stage of the Ten Beasts Cage. Standing in front of him was Zhizun realm primary stage... Steel-armed Gold Ape!

"Steel-armed Gold Ape has a physique similar to that of a human, and this grants them agility and dexterity comparable to that of a human. On top of that, they possess superior strength, such that even a typical Zhizun realm intermediate stage cultivator would not be a match for it!"

"Zhang Xuan is probably in for a difficult battle!"

Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang glanced at one another, and they saw the worry in each other's eyes.

To be honest, they had a good impression of this Beast Tamer Zhang.

Even though he was capable, he remained humble, unlike Luo Tang, who went around boasting despite knowing nothing at all.

The first three stages, the Whirlwind Wolves, Tiger Head Beasts, and Seven Meridians Vicious Bears, were only skilled in a single aspect. It was still possible for Zhang Xuan to exploit their flaws to achieve victory.

But not only did this Steel-armed Gold Ape possess a high cultivation, it was also an all-rounder, it had nearly no flaws that one could make use of.

Battling a Zhizun realm primary stage cultivator would be much less difficult than fighting against it.

"There's no need to think too much into it. Beast Tamer Zhang's strength has already surpassed our understanding. Maybe... he might really be able to achieve victory!"

Hall Master Feng shook his head.

A month ago, when he first met this Beast Tamer Zhang, the other party was only a Tongxuan realm cultivator. But in the short span of a month, the other party had already reached Zongshi realm pinnacle, and his fighting prowess was even beyond that of the Half-Zhizun realm Seven Meridians Vicious Bear.

His strength had already far surpassed them.

They wouldn't be surprised if an expert of Zhang Xuan's level were to possess such aces up his sleeves.

Under the worried gazes of the duo, Zhang Xuan walked up to the Steel-armed Gold Ape.

The Steel-armed Ape had watched how Zhang Xuan defeated the other savage beasts, and it could tell that even though he was still young, he wasn't an easy opponent at all. Thus, without any hesitation, it immediately dashed forward without any warning to launch the first blow.

Boom!

As expected of a Zhizun realm primary stage savage beast, its might far exceeded that of the previous few savage beasts Zhang Xuan faced. Before its fist could reach Zhang Xuan, the shock wave from its punch had already ripped the air in the surroundings apart with sheer force.

"Powerful!"

Zhang Xuan's face turned grim. He hurriedly faced it with a fist of his own.

Peng!

The two fists collided together, and both sides retreated several steps simultaneously.

"Hmm?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He didn't think that the Steel-armed Ape would be able to stand toe-to-toe with his Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan.

Even though the previous savage beasts were famed for their fighting prowess, their true strength still paled far in comparison to Zhang Xuan. Yet, the Steel-armed Ape was able to clash head-to-head with him, and this in itself proved testimony to its fearsome might.

Hu hu!

That single blow seemed to have incited the Steel-armed Ape's excitement. With speed as swift as a bolt of lightning, it dashed toward Zhang Xuan once more.

Just like the rumors, it possessed far superior reaction speed and agility as compared to those of the same cultivation realm, thus instilling a sense of helplessness in those who stood before it.

Peng peng peng peng!

Clashing several times, Zhang Xuan was forced to retreat continuously.

"This isn't good. That fellow is extremely strong, and his defenses

are hard to break as well. Even a momentary lapse in judgement could result in my loss, needless to say, defeating it!"

Zhang Xuan frowned.

In the end, Zhang Xuan's zhenqi cultivation was still at Zongshi realm pinnacle. The only reason why he could face the other party was due to his powerful physical body.

However, the difference between Zongshi to Zhizun didn't just lie in strength. Currently, Zhang Xuan's reaction speed still couldn't match up to Zhizun realm expert.

This made it difficult for him to keep up with the other party's movements.

If the other party was only a small cultivation realm higher than him, he could still use the Eye of Insight to deduce his next movement. However, the Steel-armed Ape was two small cultivation realms above Zhang Xuan, rendering the technique useless.

Given that Zhang Xuan couldn't predict its next move, and he couldn't keep up with the other party's movements, with just his physical strength, it was indeed difficult for him to triumph over it.

But of course, if this was a life-and-death battle, through using the Heaven's Path techniques, Zhang Xuan could still kill the other

party easily.

"Flaws!"

Knowing that it was difficult to defeat the other party barehanded, Zhang Xuan immediately made up his mind. With a thought, a book appeared in the Library of Heaven's Path. He quickly browsed through the contents of the book.

"So that's the case..."

After reading the contents, the edges of Zhang Xuan's lips curled up.

...

"He might be strong, but it will be difficult for him to triumph over the Steel-armed Gold Ape!" Watching the battle, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing commented.

As a Zhizun realm pinnacle cultivator, he was able to gauge the flow of the battle accurately.

It was clear that Zhang Xuan was in a disadvantageous position.

"It isn't just difficult, it is impossible... To think that despite clearing the first three stages so smoothly, he will fall here. It's truly a pity!"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen shook his head in lamentation.

He was looking forward to the first successful challenger of the Ten Beasts Cage here, but in the end, it seemed like his hopes wouldn't be realized.

Chapter 421: I Want to Challenge Ten Beasts Cage (2)

Zhang Xuan had probably learned some kind of incredible body tempering cultivation technique, allowing his physical strength to reach ten thousand ding, thus granting him the ability to challenge those beyond his cultivation realm.

However, the Steel-armed Golden Ape wasn't an easy opponent!

Its greatest advantage lay in that it was an all-rounder. It had no flaws regardless of which angle one was looking from. Even though that young man wasn't weak, he didn't stand a chance at all.

As the battle continued on, flaws would only start appearing in the young man's movements, thus providing the Steel-armed Ape an opening to strike at.

In Hall Master Xie Jiu Chen's view, if Zhang Xuan didn't have anything else, his loss would be inevitable.

"It's truly a pity..."

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing also came to the same verdict, and he sighed as well. Just as he was about to speak, the edges of his mouth suddenly twitched. "Hall master..."

He didn't need to speak any further. Hall Master Xie Jiuchen had

also seen the sight, and his face turned pale, and his eyeballs were about to pop out from their sockets.

Unknowingly, the atmosphere between the man and the beast who were still fighting intensely below a moment ago suddenly turned amiable, as though they'd been buddies for several decades.

The ferocious Steel-armed Golden Ape, which was trying to tear Zhang Xuan into shreds a moment ago, was currently patting Zhang Xuan's shoulder with a brotherly look that seemed to be saying 'I'll cover you'.

Not only were the duo shocked, the other spectators were also completely bewildered by this sudden situation.

This... What was going on?

Just a moment ago, they were still trying to rip each other apart. Yet, in the blink of an eye... such a matter happened?

Even if you two knew each other before, you should at least give some signs of it. What is with that sudden change in attitude?

"During the battle, I saw the young man whisper some words telepathically to the Steel-armed Golden Ape, and the latter's attitude immediately changed! What words could he have said to induce such an abrupt change?" Jiang Nanping said in bafflement.

Ever since he missed out on the first twist with the Whirlwind

Wolves, he had been looking intently on the situation before, not daring to avert his eyes in fear of missing out a single detail.

Thus, even though the change in the attitude of the human and the beast was swift, he still noticed some details——

When the Steel-armed Ape had the upper hand, the lips of the young man quivered slightly, and it seemed like he had spoken some words telepathically.

Then... the ferocious savage beast's attitude changed all of a sudden.

"I also saw it... But could one sentence really cause the attitude of the Steel-armed Golden Ape to change so rapidly? This... should be impossible, right?"

Even so, Wei Youdao was still puzzled by the situation.

"I also think that it's impossible, but... have you seen someone taming Whirlwind Wolves into cute domesticated dogs just by beating them up? Have you seen someone who made Tiger Head Beasts play dead with a single punch?" Jiang Nanping argued.

"This..." Wei Youdao's face stiffened.

Honestly, if he hadn't witnessed this sight himself, he wouldn't even dare to entertain the possibility.

Even so, he still felt doubtful about the situation. He wondered if the savage beasts had intentionally gone easy on him, even though he knew that it was impossible given the fairness of the Beast Hall.

"However, even if that fellow earned the goodwill of the Steel-armed Golden Ape, it should be impossible for it to let him pass just like that! The Steel-armed Golden Ape is the tamed beast of Elder You, and since it has already promised to guard the final stage and prevent all challengers from getting past it, it should probably fulfill its responsibility..."

Taking another glance below, Wei Youdao still wasn't able to make sense of the situation.

Even if that fellow used some trick to make the savage beasts in the cage go easy on him, it was impossible for the same trick to work on the Steel-armed Golden Ape.

After all, this was the tamed beast of Beast Hall's Elder You! It had already given its promise to guard the final stage to its dying breath. That fellow might have succeeded in persuading the Steel-armed Golden Ape against fighting, but this didn't mean that it would allow him to pass!

Before Wei Youdao could finish his words, the crisp voice of the young man below suddenly echoed in the air.

"Brother Ape, I need you to step aside so that I can pass!"

The Steel-armed Golden Ape nodded hurriedly, and without any hesitation, it immediately cleared the path. Then, it lifted its gigantic hands to bid the young man farewell.

"I think... it just chose not to fulfill its responsibility..." Jiang Nanping said.

"..." Wei Youdao.

...

Zhang Xian bade farewell to the Steel-armed Golden Ape.

No flaws could hide itself from the Library of Heaven's Path. The Steel-armed Golden Ape was born with some deficiencies, and Zhang Xuan had given him the solution to the problem. Putting aside giving way for him to pass through, even if he were to tell it to become his tamed beast at this moment, it would surely accept the request.

As long as a savage beast hadn't been completely tamed and a contract wasn't established yet, there would not be any problems in changing owners.

It was just like the situation with the Viridescent Eagle. Even though Mo Yu had paid an exorbitant price to cultivate trust with it, it still betrayed her for Zhang Xuan after a beating.

Before long, Zhang Xuan reached the end of the Ten Beasts Cage. Lifting his hand, he touched the wall at the end of the road and a brilliant radiance shone.

Ten Beasts Cage trial, success!

"He has... passed just like that? How long did he take?" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen couldn't help but ask.

"This..." Grand Elder Wei Yuqing's lips quivered and he said, "Probably... around half a tea's time!"

"Half a tea's time?" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's eyebrows twitched.

Under normal circumstances, challenging the Ten Beasts Cage would take two hours.

A tea's time is equivalent to a quarter of an hour.

And in half a tea's time, an eighth of an hour, the other party subdued ten savage beasts and passed all four stages...

"More importantly... Most of the time expended was spent on walking. Counting the time that he was facing the savage beasts... it adds up to a total of only several dozen breaths!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing continued.

Passing the Ten Beasts Cage in half a tea's time was already an

astounding feat. On top of that, to think that he only spent several dozen breaths against the savage beasts...

If not for witnessing this sight personally, if his subordinate dared to report such a matter to him, he would surely have the other party punished for lying so blatantly to him...

"Hall Master Xie, does this count as a pass?"

Just as his eyes were twitching non-stop from shock, a young man walked up toward him.

"You've passed, you've passed..." Hall Master Xie Jiuchen nodded vigorously.

If this wasn't a pass, what could be considered as one?

"Then... my spirit beast blood essence!"

The young man stared at him.

"Let's head to the balcony on top. I want to present it to you before the crowd!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen smiled.

It was a glorious affair for someone to pass the Ten Beasts Cage under his leadership, so naturally, he wanted to advertise the matter.

"Alright!"

Knowing the other party's motive, Zhang Xuan nodded silently.

Soon, the group reached the balcony.

"Fellow beast tamers and friends of the Beast Hall, I believe all of you have witnessed this young man's valiant challenge of the Ten Beasts Cage."

Upon reaching the balcony, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen took a jade box from one of the elders' hands, surveyed the surroundings below, and announced with a clear voice.

"Incredible!"

"I wonder what that beast tamer's name is. He shall be my idol from now on! I shall work hard with him as my goal."

"With him as your goal? Don't you think that you are being a little too ambitious here? You'll only end up despairing in the future. In my opinion, you should just aim for Jiang Nanping and Wei Youdao. Or else, Luo Tang, Fang Jin, and the others will do as well!"

"... That makes sense!"

A commotion broke out below.

Upon hearing the discussions, Luo Tang, Fang Jin, Wei Youdao, and Jiang Nanping, who were vehemently vying for the top spot a moment ago, turned red in embarrassment. If there was a hole in the ground at that moment, they would surely have dived in instantly.

They thought that they stood at the very top of Xuanyuan Kingdom, but with this... they realized that the other party was way out of their league!

Clearing the Ten Beasts Cage in half a tea's time, such a result was sufficient to leave them in despair.

"According to the rules of the Beast Hall, the reward for clearing the Ten Beasts Cage is a drop of spirit beast blood essence. Since Beast Tamer Zhang has succeeded in the challenge, I'll present him with the reward now!"

Hal Master Xie Jiuchen's voice reverberated in the surroundings.

He opened the jade box, and a droplet of blood swirling within a bottle appeared in everyone's view. It seemed to exude the majesty of an unparalleled expert, exerting a strong pressure on those within its vicinity.

Spirit beast blood essence!

"Beast Tamer Zhang, congratulations!"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen presented the jade box over to Zhang Xuan with a bright smile.

"Un!" Zhang Xuan grabbed the jade box.

His main goal at the Beast Hall was this, and having achieved his primary objective, he was in good spirits.

"From today onward, I hope that everyone can view Beast Tamer Zhang as their role model and cultivate diligently. The Ten Beasts Cage trial shall always be open to all beast tamers to prove their capability!"

Knowing that this was an ideal occasion to promote the matter, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen stroked his beard and chuckled, "No matter who it is, as long as one passes the trial, the Beast Hall will bestow a droplet of spirit beast blood essence to them!"

"I believe I need not explain the significance of spirit beast blood essence to beast tamers! So, work hard. As long as you give it your all, the sky is the limit..." Hall Master Xie Jiuchen declared grandly.

Honestly speaking, his words were extremely motivational.

When everyone saw the reward, they saw the possibility of them standing in Zhang Xuan's place...

As soon as the voice came to a halt, an uproar broke out below. Many of the younger beast tamers had their faces red in agitation, and their hands were tightly clenched together.

The spirit beast blood essence was extremely useful to both human and savage beast alike. Every single droplet was worth a fortune, and there was no beast tamer who could resist such a reward.

Since someone else passed the Ten Beasts Cage, why can't I do the same?

In a moment, a wave of excitement swept across the crowd.

"Hall Master, I would like to challenge the Ten Beasts Cage as well!"

"I want to give it a try too..."

In just a few breaths, more than a dozen beast tamers had already rushed up to the tower.

Seeing the motivated faces below, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen nodded in satisfaction. Just as he was about to speak, the young man beside him kept the spirit beast blood essence in his storage ring and started staring at him intently.

"Hall master, since everyone can challenge the Ten Beasts Cage, it shouldn't be a problem for me to attempt it once more, right?"

The two drops that he obtained by Lin Ruotian only granted him a strength of 9999 ding. He didn't even manage to reach Zhizun realm.

Even if this single drop were to help him to break through his bottleneck, he would still be a far way off from Zhizun realm pinnacle.

If he wanted to avenge Lu Chong, he needed to possess at least strength of that level.

Thus, he needed much more spirit beast blood essence.

"What did you say?"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen was taken aback by Zhang Xuan's question, and for a moment, he couldn't react.

"I said that... I want to challenge the Ten Beasts Cage again!" Zhang Xuan said.

"You want to challenge it again?" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's lips twitched. "Didn't you just pass the challenge?"

"That's right. However, you just said 'No matter who it is, as long as one passes the trial, the Beast Hall will bestow a droplet of spirit beast blood essence to one'. I need a lot more spirit beast blood

essence, so I would like to continue challenging it!" Zhang Xuan replied seriously.

"Continue challenging it?"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's body swayed vigorously.

You successfully completed the challenge in just half a tea's time. If you were allowed to attempt it again and again, wouldn't our Beast Hall fall into bankruptcy?

Given how valuable spirit beast blood essence was, even Xuanyuan Kingdom's Beast Hall didn't have too much of it...

"Indeed!" Zhang Xuan nodded seriously. He started taking out his fingers and started calculating. "Don't worry, I won't get too greedy. Just allow me to challenge it another twenty times!"

"..."

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's body swayed, and he nearly fell over the railing of the balcony.

Chapter 422: Nightmare Beast

Twenty? And you said that you aren't greedy?

Do you know how many drops of spirit beast blood essence are there in our Beast Hall?

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's face was turning green.

If only he'd known the intentions of this Beast Tamer Zhang in advance, he wouldn't have made his previous declaration so valiantly.

He had just said that anyone who successfully clears the trial will receive a droplet of spirit beast blood essence, and this fellow immediately raised the topic.

Why did it feel as though he was tricked?

If he were to challenge it again and again, wouldn't the Beast Hall have to present him with spirit beast blood essence again and again?

Even with the thousand years of heritage behind Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall, spirit beast blood essence was still an extremely limited commodity. If that fellow was allowed to do as he pleased, the Beast Hall would surely fall into bankruptcy!

When other people challenged the Ten Beasts Cage, even if they were able to clear, it would likely to be a close call, and they would often have to remain in bed for three to five months to recuperate.

Yet, this fellow passed the challenge as though he was just strolling in the gardens. Not only was he fine... he even managed to collect a group of savage beast minions.

Just look at that, the sweetly smiling Steel-armed Golden Ape was still waving to him continuously, and it seemed as though its hands would tear off at this rate...

And not too far away, the Whirlwind Wolves were still staring at him with looks of desire.

Desire your head!

It had been awhile since they were captured under Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's orders, but due to their arrogant personality, most of the young beast tamers were unable to tame them. That was why he chose to put it in the Ten Beasts Cage as one of the stages...

Yet, after a beating, not only were they not angry, they stared at Zhang Xuan with a look of desire. Did they really crave for a beating so much?

He could already see that if Zhang Xuan were to be allowed to continue on, at this rate, not only would the Beast Hall go bankrupt, all of the savage beasts within would also become his...

What kind of monster was this?

"Since hall master has agreed to it, I'll go down right now. Honestly speaking, the Ten Beasts Cage is quite an interesting challenge!" Taking the other party's silence as consent, Zhang Xuan prepared to leap down.

He urgently needed the twenty droplets of spirit beats blood essence, and he had no time to waste. Since he had already decided on the matter, he planned to get it over and done with quickly.

"Wait a moment..."

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen hurriedly walked over to stop him. With an awkward smile, he said, "There's no hurry. You have just cleared the Ten Beasts Cage, so you must be exhausted. Why don't you rest first? We can talk about it afterward!"

"There's no need for that, I'm not tired! Actually, this challenge is also a form of training to me, so there's no need for Hall Master to worry for me." Zhang Xuan nodded.

Worry...

Who the heck is worried about you!

I am worried that you would collapse the entire Beast Hall...

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen hurriedly waved his hands, "I know that Beast Tamer Zhang possess extraordinary talents in beast taming, and challenging it consecutively isn't a problem for you. But... gathering so many powerful savage beasts isn't an easy feat... Even if you're not exhausted, you should allow the savage beasts to rest for a moment."

"Rest?"

Glancing downward, Zhang Xuan asked, "Are any of you tired?"

The Whirlwind Wolves, Tiger Head Beasts, and Steel-armed Golden Ape hurriedly shook their heads.

"Look, they're not tired!" Zhang Xuan said.

"..." Hall Master Xie Jiuchen felt light-headed.

Say, how can someone as capable at beast taming as you lack EQ?

Isn't my intention clear enough? I don't want you to challenge the Ten Beasts Cage, why can't you get the hint?

"Cough cough, Beast Tamer Zhang. Perhaps you don't understand the hall master's words. What he means to say is that since you have already cleared the Ten Beasts Cage once, you shouldn't challenge it again. There's not much significance to it

like that!"

Seeing the conversation between the two, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing couldn't help but interject.

"I can earn a droplet of spirit beast blood essence every time I clear it. This is extremely important to me!" Zhang Xuan replied with a serious expression.

Of course there is a significance to it! If not, I would not have been so bored as to travel this far just to challenge it.

"You..."

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing's face turned gray in frustration. He had tried to beat around the bush, but the other party revealed his intentions straight...

How the hell can we continue talking if you are going to be just like that?

"Alright, I know that you'll definitely clear the challenge. However, the opportunity must be given to the other beast tamers as well. Thus, let's drop the matter!"

Unable to hold it any longer, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen waved his hands and made up his mind.

"This..." Zhang Xuan frowned.

He'd learned about the Ten Beasts Cage from a book in the Beast Hall, so he traveled the distance here to challenge it. He thought that if he could do it twenty consecutive times, he would have sufficient spirit beast blood essence to fuel his Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan. Yet, the other party simply turned him down.

"It's alright if you don't allow me to challenge it as well!"

After a moment of hesitation, Zhang Xuan glanced at the duo and said, "I urgently require nineteen more droplets of spirit beast blood essence. Regardless of through buying or trading, I have to obtain them."

"You still need nineteen more droplets?"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing glanced at one another, light-headed.

Why in the world would he need so much spirit beast blood essence? To boil a stew?

Normal savage beasts would find it difficult to even absorb a single droplet of the blood essence. Yet, you asked for twenty at a single go... Are you trying to build an army of savage beasts?

"It's possible for us to sell some to you. A single droplet of spirit beast blood essence costs five spirit stones. However, as you're a

beast tamer, we can give you a discount and charge you four spirit stones!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen said.

"Four spirit stones for a single droplet?" Zhang Xuan widened his eyes. "Forget it, I guess I'll challenge the Ten Beasts Cage after all. You all should hurry up and make preparations!"

He was also trying to find spirit stones to raise his cultivation as well!

Four spirit stones for a single droplet... Why don't you rob a bank?

Grabbing onto his chin, Zhang Xuan started to calculate, "Since spirit beast blood essence is so expensive, after challenging the Ten Beasts Cage twenty times, I don't really need anymore. If so, I can sell them back to you. If I challenge it a hundred times in a day, I can earn 400 spirit stones. Continue that for a month and I'll have more than ten thousand spirit stones..."

"..."

The two leaders of the Beast Hall felt frenzied.

Brother, must you be so determined to wreck our Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall?

What kind of grudge do you have against us?

"Alright, enough! We can give twenty droplets of spirit beast blood essence to you, but we have a condition!"

Feeling so stifled that his chest was about to burst apart, an idea suddenly appeared in Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's mind. He gestured grandly and harrumphed.

If he were to allow the other party to do as he pleased, not only would the Beast Hall fall apart, he would also become a laughingstock of the other Conferred Kingdom Beast Halls in the surroundings.

"A condition?"

"That's right. Our Beast Hall has just captured a savage beast, but it's proving difficult to tame. If you can find a way to tame it for the Beast Hall's usage, we'll be willing to give you ten additional droplets on top of your twenty!"

"But of course, if you fail, you are not to bring up the matter of challenging the Ten Beasts Cage anymore!"

"Ten additional droplets?" Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up. "Alright, I agree to your condition!"

Judging by how the other party kept pushing the matter down, it would be impossible for him to continue challenging the Ten Beasts Cage. Since the other party had already raised this

condition, he would be a fool to not accept it.

Ten droplets were equivalent to forty spirit stones. It was a profitable business to earn this massive sum just by taming a savage beast.

"If you don't agree to it, I'll take it as you have forfeited the rights yourself. So, don't ever mention the matter of challenging the Ten Beasts Cage ever again..."

Yet to process Zhang Xuan's reply, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen continued on. But halfway through, he suddenly paused, and his eyes slowly widened. "What did you say? You agree to it?"

"That's right. Why shouldn't I agree to it?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"But... Do you know what savage beast you are going to tame? Why would you agree to it so readily?" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen was overwhelmed by so much shock that he was about to tear off his beard.

Even a 3-star beast tamer, a Zhizun realm pinnacle expert, like himself was unable to tame the savage beast, yet you agreed to the matter so readily?

Initially, he was only thinking of using this matter to deter the other party from bringing up the matter of challenging the Ten Beasts Cage ever again. After all, since even he was unable to tame it, he didn't think that the other party was capable of doing so

either.

Yet, before he could finish his words, the other party had already agreed to the matter.

"Who cares what savage beast it is!" Zhang Xuan waved nonchalantly.

Honestly, to Zhang Xuan, the type or strength of the savage beast didn't matter to him.

What he was concerned about was whether he could earn sufficient spirit beast blood essence.

"... Alright!"

Seeing how confident the other party was, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen hesitated for a moment before nodding his head.

The truth of the situation wasn't too far from what Hall Master Feng deduced. The reason why the Beast Taming Competition was suddenly brought forward was to bring all of the geniuses from the various kingdoms over here to brainstorm on a method to tame that savage beast.

Given how talented the fellow before him was, especially after seeing how he tamed a group of Whirlwind Wolves in the blink of an eye... Perhaps, he might really have a solution to their problem.

As long as he could tame that savage beast, even thirty droplets of spirit beast blood essence weren't a big deal.

"Let's go then. I'll bring you to meet it!"

Coming to a decision, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen decided not to dawdle on it. He called for an elder and gave him some instructions before leading Zhang Xuan and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing to the depths of the Beast Hall.

Knowing that this was an opportunity for him to earn more spirit beast blood essence, Zhang Xuan hurriedly followed behind him without much hesitation.

"Teacher!"

"Young master!"

Along the way, Zhang Xuan met Zhao Ya, Sun Qiang, and the others, who were waiting outside for him.

"Let's go together then!"

There weren't many things Zhang Xuan needed to hide from these people. Thus, he invited them to tag along, and they soon arrived at a vast courtyard.

The courtyard was surrounded with high walls that were around a dozen meters thick, similar to city walls. The interiors were slightly blurred, and with a single glance, one could tell that a formidable formation was set up within.

"The savage beast is just inside! I'll just say it first, it isn't too late for you to back down now."

The group came to a stop right outside the courtyard. With a grim expression, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen said, "The savage beast is actually a [Nightmare Beast]. Our Beast Hall paid a heavy price before we were able to capture it. Due to the hint of Dragon Bloodline it possessed, it has an extremely arrogant nature, making it nearly impossible to tame it."

"Nightmare Beast? A Half-Transcension savage beast?"

Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

Having assimilated the knowledge from the books in the Beast Hall, Zhang Xuan possessed knowledge of the savage beast.

It was known as the number one strongest savage beast beneath that of spirit beasts. Possessing a hint of Dragon Bloodline, it wielded incredible strength. Even Transcendent Mortal 1-dan primary stage experts would find it hard to face!

To think that the Beast Hall would actually manage to capture such a powerful beast, it was truly incredible!

"Indeed. This fellow has a ferocious nature, and it'll be difficult to even approach it. I can bring you to meet it, but if you find yourself stumped, just give up. Don't take the risk. But of course, once you give up, you mustn't bring up the matter of challenging the Ten Beasts Cage ever again." Hall Master Xie Jiuchen raised his conditions.

He was afraid that the other party would turn his attention back to the Ten Beasts Cage after realizing that he was unable to tame the Nightmare Beast. If so, all of his efforts would be in vain.

"Let's go in and take a look!" Zhang Xuan prompted.

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing nodded. They found the entrance to the formation and led the crowd in.

The courtyard was vast, and on top of the formation, a massive metal cage specially crafted by blacksmiths were laid out within. If a savage beast were to be trapped within it, it would be nearly impossible to escape.

After circling around the courtyard, they finally reached the perimeter of the metal cage. Within it, they saw a five-meters tall and ten-meters long massive savage beast lying quietly on the ground. Upon noticing the presence of outsiders, its eyes immediately turned red, and it released a deafening roar.

Chapter 423: Ancient Beast Language

Its roar was so loud that it threatened to burst the ear drums of everyone present.

Of the group, Yuan Tao, Sun Qiang, and the others who had weaker cultivation jolted upon hearing the roar. Their faces paled, and their bodies swayed weakly from side to side.

It seemed like they were injured just by the powerful roar itself.

"You all should leave first!"

Knowing that a powerful savage beast could kill one with its roar by itself, Zhang Xuan shook his hands.

Sun Qiang, Yuan Tao, and the others hurriedly left.

"This is the Nightmare Beast!"

A grim expression appeared on Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's face.

The Nightmare Beast was simply too strong; even he wasn't a match for it. If not for the sturdy cage, the unique formation, and the multiple layers of traps laid out in the courtyard, it would have already escaped.

Spirit beasts possessed wisdom that was not inferior to a human

in any way. Upon reaching this level, they could already cultivate on their own to raise their cultivation.

Even though the Nightmare Beast before them had not reached the level of a spirit beast yet, it was not too far from reaching that level. On top of that, it possessed a trace of Dragon Bloodline, augmenting its already fearsome prowess. If not for the unique circumstances, it would have been impossible for the Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall to capture it.

"It's injured?"

Zhang Xuan glanced at it briefly before frowning.

"Un!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen nodded.

The 'unique circumstances' referred to this fellow being injured, thus giving them an opportunity to strike.

However, judging from its rate of recovery, it should be able to fully recover in less than a month. If they didn't tame it within this period of time, it would surely escape from their grasp by then.

This was precisely the reason why they went to the extent of pushing forward the Beast Taming Competition just to try and find a viable method to tame it.

"Its internal injuries came from its failed attempt at breaking through the bottleneck of a spirit beast!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen

explained.

Zhang Xuan nodded.

That was indeed the case.

Even without the Library of Heaven's Path and Eye of Insight, just based on his knowledge of savage beasts, he could tell this much.

At Half-Transcension, be it humans or savage beasts, they would hope to take the one last step to reach a higher order of existence.

This Nightmare Beast forcibly pushed itself to make that breakthrough, but it failed and a rebound occurred, reducing it to its current state. Unable to move, it could only roar to instill fear in its enemies.

Otherwise, if a Half-Transcension savage beast were to go on a rampage, even a Half-Transcension cultivator would be unable to withstand its might. It would have been completely impossible for Xie Jiuchen and the others to capture it and lock it here.

"As long as you can find a viable method to tame it, we'll do it ourselves. If it works, we'll give you thirty droplets of spirit beast blood." Xie Jiuchen explained the terms of this exchange.

Given that young lad's strength, it would be impossible for him to tame a Half-Transcension savage beast.

Thus, he only asked for a viable solution.

If he deduces it to be feasible, all of the 3-star beast tamers would cooperate together to carry it out. As long as they succeed, no price was too heavy to pay.

If they were to tame a savage beast of this level, the strength of the entire Beast Hall would be brought to whole new heights.

In contrast, thirty spirit beast blood essence wasn't a heavy price at all.

"Find a viable method?"

Not expecting the other party's request to be so simple, Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

Delighted, he gestured, "Alright, go over and knock that fellow out then. After I observe him, I'll give you a viable solution to the matter!"

The Nightmare Beast was too strong, so the Eye of Insight was ineffective against it. On the other hand, for the Library of Heaven's Path to be triggered, the other party had to execute a battle technique or... be knocked out.

Given how that fellow couldn't even stand up, it was impossible

for it to execute a battle technique. The roar couldn't be considered as a battle technique as well.

Thus, the only way to activate the Library of Heaven's Path was to knock it out.

Only then could Zhang Xuan determine a viable taming method through its flaws.

"Knock that fellow out?"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing thought that the other party might have some brilliant situation, so their ears were pricked to listen to whatever he had to say. However, after hearing those words, their eyelids twitched.

That fellow possessed the Dragon Bloodline! Knock it out?

They had to have the capability to do it first!

Those of the Dragon Bloodline possessed outstanding recovery capability, and their defenses were far superior to other savage beasts. Even a Half-Transcension expert couldn't knock out a Half-Transcension savage beast easily, needless to say, them.

"You can't do it?"

Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up.

Given that the other party couldn't demonstrate battle technique, and they couldn't knock it out either, this situation was a little tricky.

"You should... think of another solution!" Xie Jiuchen said.

Zhang Xuan scratched his head.

There were many beast taming techniques, but given how even the experienced hall master was unable to come up with anything feasible, how could he have any ideas?

The usual method Zhang Xuan used was to raise the other party's strength through the Heaven's Path zhenqi, but given the huge disparity in strength, the effects of the Heaven's Path zhenqi would be minimal.

He wouldn't be able to earn the other party's goodwill through inducing such insignificant growth.

"My opinion is still to... knock it out!"

After a long moment, Zhang Xuan could not find any good ideas. Thus, he could only reiterate his stand.

"..." Xie Jiuchen and Wei Yuqing.

"Actually, we've also thought of a feasible solution, but we aren't able to carry it out!"

A long while later, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen suddenly spoke.

"Oh?" Curious, Zhang Xuan turned his gaze over.

"Since the Nightmare Beast attempted the breakthrough, it must know the method to do so. Such methods are normally left behind by ancient spirit beasts, and if we can find a beast tamer skilled in ancient beast language, he might be able to earn its respect. If so, it would be much easier to tame it." Hall Master Xie Jiuchen said.

"Ancient beast language?"

"Un. While beast tamers can converse with their own tamed beast, it is still extremely inconvenient for them to communicate with other savage beasts. Back then, Empyrean Kong shi left behind a [Beast Language Scroll], and as long as one learns it, one would be able to speak with spirit beasts freely. This fellow isn't a spirit beast, but it's already extremely close to that level. On top of that, it also possesses a hint of the Dragon Bloodline, so it should be capable of basic conversation in that language. Otherwise, it wouldn't be able to learn of the method left behind by ancient spirit beats either."

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen eyes gradually grew grim, and he spoke slowly, "If there were someone among us who was skilled in it, we'd be able to converse with it and know what it wanted. If so, taming it would be much easier."

Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

There was some information on the ancient beast language through the books in Xuanluo Mountain Beast Hall.

However, there were very few people who were adept in it, and most of them were high-ranked beast tamers.

This was precisely the reason why these beast tamers could win the trust of savage beasts easily, and make them listen to them.

"Does our Beast Hall have books on the ancient beast language?"

Zhang Xuan couldn't help but ask.

"We do have some, but most of them are from a faraway era. On top of that, most of them are just the deductions of our predecessors, and we've no way of determining whether they are authentic or not." Xie Jiuchen shook his head bitterly.

Even though the complete heritage of ancient beast language had slowly disappeared, some sounds of words still remained in circulation. However... these were useless by itself. Putting aside whether they were real or not, it was impossible to determine their meaning just by the sound itself.

Countless predecessors of the Beast Hall had tried studying it, but

most of the words originated from legends, and their meanings were lost. On top of that, some of these legends were fabricated, and it was impossible to discern truth from falsehood. Realizing the impossibility of the task, everyone eventually chose to give up on it.

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up.

"Can you bring me over to take a look?"

Others might not be able to discern truth from false, but he was different!

With the Library of Heaven's Path, as long as they were in written form, it was a walk in the park for him to determine what was true and what was false!

Chapter 424: Bizarre Language [2in1]

"You want to look at those books?"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing glanced at one another in confusion.

The ancient beast language sounded incredible, but its heritage had already been lost. The possibility of learning it through books was zero.

Even if the content of the book was authentic, without a tutor to guide one, it was impossible for one to verbalize the sound out accurately.

What made things worse was that each word of the ancient beast language had a special zhenqi circulation method to verbalize it. Without it, it was impossible to pronounce it accurately, especially with a human's sound box.

Countless predecessors of the Beast Hall had devoted their lives in an attempt to decipher the language, but none had succeeded. Yet, this fellow said that he wanted to browse through those books to learn the language so leisurely... Did he really think that he could master it just by reading through those?

"Un!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

"This..." Hall Master Xie Jiuchen hesitated. Knowing the

impossibility of the task, he tried to talk Zhang Xuan out of it, "Studying the ancient beast language isn't something that can be accomplished all of a sudden. Without a proper tutor, I'm afraid that you might accidentally injure yourself..."

"I'm just taking a casual look. If, by chance, I were to succeed, perhaps I'll be able to tame this fellow!" Zhang Xuan smiled.

Hearing the other party insisting on the matter, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen frowned in displeasure.

Given how the other party cleared the Ten Beasts Cage so easily, his talents and strength were definitely top-notch. But why would a genius like him choose to do something so pointless and foolish?

Do you think that the ancient beast language is something one can grasp just by reading books?

If that was the case, there wouldn't be so little beast tamers who knew the ancient beast language.

By chance... If it were possible to succeed by chance, they wouldn't be in such a dilemma.

You must be jesting!

"Fine. Elder Wei, lead him there. Feel free to browse through the books of the Beast Hall. However, I won't tolerate you making a fuss over the Ten Beasts Cage after this!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen

said, suppressing his displeasure.

"Alright!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

Even though the Beast Hall had many savage beasts, it was still nigh impossible for them to gather a sufficient number of them for Zhang Xuan to challenge the Ten Beasts Cage another nineteen times. The reason why Zhang Xuan insisted on the matter previously was to force the other party to compromise.

After observing the Nightmare Beast for a while longer, Zhang Xuan was still unable to come up with a better idea, so he decided to follow behind Grand Elder Wei Yuqing to the library.

"The books on the ancient beast language are placed randomly throughout the library, feel free to browse through them!"

As the duo reached the library, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing gestured to the massive collection of books inside.

He shared the same thoughts as Hall Master Xie Jiuchen. To think of learning the ancient beast language just by reading books... You must be dreaming!

If it was that easy to take it on, beast tamers adept in the ancient beast language wouldn't be so valued.

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing left with a look of disappointment on his face. Zhang Xuan noticed it, but he didn't pay it any heed. In any

case, he would prefer to be left alone here anyway.

The Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall's library was much larger than that of the Xuanluo Mountain Range branch. Countless books were placed upon tall bookshelves that extended all the way to the limits of one's sight. Since Zhang Xuan was already here, he might as well just collect all of the books within. Thus, placing his fingers on the first book on the first row, he started running.

...

"Seems like he's still too young. His outstanding accomplishment has led to his complacency!"

Returning to the courtyard, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing shook his head.

"Considering how he was able to become a 2-star beast tamer and could face a Zhizun realm savage beast despite his young age, it is no wonder that he would become complacent. But still, to attempt to learn the ancient beast language just by browsing through books, he is underestimating the occupation!"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen said with a slight frown on his face.

Initially, he bore great expectations of this young man... However, after hearing the solution the other party came up with, all of his goodwill for the other party vanished.

Knocking the Nightmare Beast out... You must be pulling my leg!

To tame a savage beast, one had to learn its habits, likes, dislikes, and such. Forcibly knocking the other party out would only incur its resentment.

That fellow had a proud nature. It was already difficult to tame, and if they were to really knock it out, the possibility would probably drop to zero.

"Indeed!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing nodded in agreement.

"Let's not talk about him. How are the challengers of the Ten Beasts Cage faring?" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen asked.

While the group was tending to the Nightmare Beast, the Ten Beasts Cage had been busy as well.

Many of the geniuses who came to Xuanyuan Kingdom were stirred by Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's speech, and they were spurred to give it a try.

"I took a look before coming here, and the challengers... aren't doing too well!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing flashed a bitter smile.

After bringing Zhang Xuan to the library, he took a look, and the sight he saw brought a bitter smile to his face.

Beast Tamer Zhang had pummeled the Whirlwind Wolves and easily passed the first stage previously, even winning their admiration in the process of doing so. As though emulating his success, the first few challengers also charged straight at the Whirlwind Wolves. However... they ended up as the one being pummeled instead, and two of them were even nearly gnawed to death.

One of the more formidable geniuses managed to get past the Whirlwind Wolves and proceeded on to face the Tiger Head Beast.

He imitated Zhang Xuan's strategy and struck the other party's abdomen. The result? His arms almost fell off from the rebound, and the momentary opening from that nearly turned him into a lump of meat paste.

In less than an hour, more than ten geniuses had already fallen. On top of that, the majority of them didn't even clear the first stage.

Even the famous Jiang Nanping, Fang Jin, and Luo Tang had given it a try. A handful of them was even stronger than Zhang Xuan, but they were still defeated in the first stage.

Those wolves were obedient as though pugs before Zhang Xuan, so the challengers didn't think of them as a threat. Yet, when it came to them, they showed their true might as predators of the forest.

"If it were that easy to clear the Ten Beasts Cage, there wouldn't

be no successful challenger for the past thousand years!"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen seemed to have anticipated this result, and he shook his head in lamentation.

He knew very well the difficulty of the Ten Beasts Cage. He didn't underestimate it just because Zhang Xuan cleared it easily.

"Un!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing nodded. At this moment, he suddenly recalled a matter and said, "Right, the ruckus Beast Tamer Zhang caused by challenging the Ten Beasts Cage is too great. I'm afraid that... even if we were to host the Beast Taming Competition now, there wouldn't be much point to it!"

"Oh?" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen fell into deep contemplation.

"Beast Tamer Zhang is young, and he meets the prerequisites for the Beast Taming Competition... After he cleared the Ten Beasts Cage, his prestige has soared. Under such circumstances, there won't be much point in winning the champion seat..." Grand Elder Wei Yuqing smiled bitterly.

"You mean that... everyone views Beast Tamer Zhang as their goal? So, even if we conduct the Beast Taming Competition and someone wins the champion seat, as long as the champion doesn't clear the Ten Beasts Challenge, he won't be recognized by the masses?"

Xie Jiuchen came to a realization.

If the jade that came before was too radiant, it would dull the glow of those trailing behind.

This Beast Tamer Zhang was clearly such a jade.

He cleared the Ten Beasts Cage in a single go, breaking the thousand year record of Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall. Even if someone were to be hailed as the champion of the Beast Taming Competition, as long as he doesn't clear the Ten Beasts Cage, the prestige of his achievement would surely be compromised.

"Indeed!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing nodded.

"This..."

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's smiled bitterly.

Actually, it wasn't that he'd neglected this matter. It was just that, from the very start, he didn't expect that fellow to clear the Ten Beasts Cage, let alone clearing it so easily!

"Since that's the case, pass down an order saying that... the content of the Beast Taming Competition this time around will be the Ten Beasts Cage. Whoever passes the challenge will be the champion!" After hesitating for a moment, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen continued, "Also, check which branch does Beast Tamer Zhang belong to. If no one clears the Ten Beasts Cage... He'll be declared as the champion!"

"Alright!" Wei Yuqing nodded.

This was the only solution left.

If Zhang Xuan knew that he could win the champion seat on top of earning the spirit beast blood essence through challenging the Ten Beasts Cage, it would be hard to say what he would feel.

However, at this very moment, a helpless frown was etched deeply on his forehead.

After a day of hard work, he finally collected all of the books in the Beast Hall into the Library of Heaven's Path.

Upon doing so, he thought that it should be easy for him to compile all of the ancient beast language books to create an accurate manual on the language. However... after taking a look, he finally understood why Xie Jiuchen and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing didn't think well of him.

The predecessors had indeed left behind many books on the ancient beast language, and written in these books were their personal insights on the verbalization of the language. However... after verifying the contents with the Library of Heaven's Path, Zhang Xuan realized that the words that were authentic... numbered less than ten!

How could one communicate with savage beasts with less than

ten words?

To think that there would be only ten correct words in several hundred ancient beast language books...

It was no wonder that no one succeeded. With this level of accuracy in the ancient texts, it would take a miracle for one to successfully learn the language.

"Seems like learning the ancient beast language is impossible..."

Zhang Xuan shook his head in disappointment.

If he had mastered the ancient beast language through the Library of Heaven's Path, it would be much easier for him to tame savage beasts in the future. However, from the looks of it now, it seemed like he had underestimated the matter.

The ancient beast language was a creation of Kong shi, and if one could learn it that easily, there would not be so many stumped beast tamers in the world.

"Hmm? There seems to be another book on the ancient beast language over there..."

Just as Zhang Xuan was about to leave the library to convince Xie Jiuchen to knock out the Nightmare Beast, his eyes suddenly caught sight of a book lying in the corner of the room.

It was a thick book with the word 'Language' written in an ancient script on its cover.

As it was placed in a remote corner, he didn't notice it previously.

He walked over and took it out.

This book was around ten fingers thick, and a thick layer of dust cloaked its cover. Its pages had a yellowish tint, hinting at a long history behind them. It seemed to have been placed here for innumerable years, unnoticed by any.

"Flaws!"

Touching it, a similar book appeared on the shelves within the Library of Heaven's Path.

"Hmm? This isn't ancient beast language?"

Flipping it open, Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

Written within the book was the introduction of a unique language, as well as the way to verbalize it. However, there was a clear distinction between it and the ancient beast language. The book didn't reveal what exactly was that language, and the details provided by the Library of Heaven's Path didn't reveal anything significant about its origin either.

"There is a total of three correct words!"

Zhang Xuan flipped through the book.

There were thousands of words described in the ten-fingers thick book, but after verification from the Library of Heaven's Path, there were only three correct ones.

"Compile!"

Zhang Xuan gathered all of the correct portions to form an entirely new book.

"I should try these three words first..."

Taking a deep breath, Zhang Xuan drove his zhenqi according to the circulation method derived from the book through the Library of Heaven's Path.

"Moo!"

A sound echoed, and the world around Zhang Xuan seemed to tremor violently for an instant. At the same time, his body swayed, and the sight before him turned dark.

"What... kind of language is this? How can it be so fearsome?"

The immense energy expenditure from verbalizing that single word had nearly knocked him out. He quickly took deep breaths to recover.

Just verbalizing a single sound had nearly sapped his zhenqi dry. On top of that, his instincts told him that if not for his incredibly pure Heaven's Path zhenqi, even with the knowledge of the correct verbalization method, he wouldn't have been able to verbalize that sound.

After studying the ancient beast language, he realized that even though it was difficult to verbalize the words, it wasn't too hard to speak fluently once one grasps the correct zhenqi circulation method. This logic seemed to apply to the mysterious language as well.

But just verbalizing a single sound had nearly caused him to pass out! That was way too fearsome!

"It is said that the more formidable a language is, the more difficult it is to verbalize it. It will have a high requirement on the purity of one's zhenqi as well. Could this language have some kind of impressive background to it?"

Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up.

Even though he was bewildered by the existence of such a mysterious language, his bewilderment did little to dampen his agitation.

Having read innumerable books, he knew that humans weren't the only race in the Master Teacher Continent. There were innumerable other races, and each of them had their own unique language; the more formidable a race is, the more powerful their words will be. At the same time, there would be a higher requirement on the purity of one's zhenqi to verbalize those words.

On this aspect, Heaven's Path zhenqi stood at the top, even among the ranks of superior zhenqi.

But despite this, Zhang Xuan was still unable to sustain the expenditure from voicing out the words. What kind of language did these three words originate from for them to be so powerful?

After studying it for half a day, he realized that he couldn't interpret the contents of the ancient book. In fact, he couldn't even read a single word. Thus, he shook his head and gave up.

"Given that I have only learned a few words, I can't depend on the ancient beast language anymore..."

Zhang Xuan thought that he could return accomplished with the ancient beast language in his arsenal.

"But in any case, I should still try and see if I can hoodwink the Nightmare Beast with these words. It would be good if I succeed. Otherwise, I'll have to look for other solutions!"

Stretching his back lazily, Zhang Xuan walked out of the library and headed toward the courtyard where the Nightmare Beast was housed.

Even though he had only learned a few words, through the Library of Heaven's Path, he was certain that these were authentic words from the ancient beast language. Perhaps, he might be able to convince the other party with just these words.

If, on the off chance, he succeeds, he would be able to earn thirty spirit beast blood essence immediately.

Otherwise, he would have to find a way or another to knock the Nightmare Beast out.

"Beast Tamer Zhang!"

Soon, he arrived at the courtyard. Before walking in, he saw many figures walking anxiously about the previously remote courtyard.

The huge group of beast tamers that he saw above when he was clearing the Ten Beasts Cage were all here.

"What happened?"

Zhang Xuan walked in doubtfully, and he immediately saw two familiar figures amidst the crowd.

"Beast Tamer Zhang!"

The other party also saw him, and they walked up to him.

"Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang, why are you two here?"

Zhang Xuan was perplexed.

These two were the beast tamers from the Xuanluo Mountain Range branch, Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang.

"Why are we here?" Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang coughed. "The Beast Taming Competition has been brought forward, but we weren't able to contact you. Thus, we came here in advance!"

"The Beast Taming Competition has been brought forward?" Zhang Xuan blinked his eyes in surprise.

If the other party hadn't raised this matter, he would have already forgotten the issue.

Ever since arriving at Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall, he immediately rushed to the Ten Beasts Cage. Right after that, he went to the courtyard to meet the Nightmare Beast before busying himself at the library. As such, he had no way of knowing that the

Beast Taming Competition had been brought forward.

Besides, he didn't explicitly agree to the competition then. Thus, he didn't pay much attention to the matter.

"You didn't know?"

Seeing the confused expression on the other party's face, the two great beast tamers swayed.

"I didn't!" Zhang Xuan confirmed their suspicions.

"But... you are the champion of the competition!" The two beast tamers scratched their heads in frenzy.

Are you for real? Just a moment ago... Hall Master Xie Jiuchen announced that Zhang Xuan was the champion of the Beast Taming Competition!

He even specially visited them to offer his congratulations...

Despite being the champion, Zhang Xuan actually didn't even know that the competition had been brought forward...

Can you get any more confused than that?

"Champion? What champion?"

Not only were the duo baffled, Zhang Xuan was also bewildered by the situation as well.

I don't even know when the competition is held, how in the world did I become the champion?

"The content of the Beast Taming Competition this time is the Ten Beasts Cage. Of all of the participants, you're the only one who succeeded... So naturally, you became the champion!"

Seeing that the other party really knew nothing at all, Hall Master Feng could only explain the situation speechlessly.

To think that even someone as confused as him could become the champion, he was truly speechless.

For every single competition, their Xuanluo Mountain Range branch would always go around searching for talents to vie for a good placing. Yet, they had never succeeded...

This time, they managed to win the championship, yet the candidate himself didn't even know what was happening.

"I see... Is there any prize for the champion?"

After hearing that he became the champion just because he challenged the Ten Beasts Cage, Zhang Xuan was speechless. But

soon, recalling something, his eyes lit up.

Becoming the champion wasn't anything much to him, what he was more concerned about was the reward!

If he could win twenty or thirty spirit beast blood essence, he could spare himself much hassle.

"The reward is five spirit stones. I have already claimed it for you, you can check on it!"

At which, Hall Master Feng took out a narrow jade box. Opening it, five spirit stones placed side by side appeared before Zhang Xuan's eyes.

"Just these?"

Zhang Xuan thought that he would be able to earn generous rewards by winning the championship. Yet, for the reward to be only five spirit stones, the Beast Hall was truly miserly.

However, no matter how little the reward was, it was still useful to him. There was no reason for him to reject it.

After keeping the spirit stones into his storage ring, he glanced at the surroundings and asked, "What's happening? Why are so many people gathered here?"

Yesterday, when he came, a formation was set up here, and no outsiders were allowed to enter. Why did the situation become like that all of the sudden?

"The Beast Hall caught a Half-Transcension savage beast, and they wish to tame it. However, they had been unable to find a feasible method to do so. The reason why they pushed forward the Beast Taming Competition was to gather the hall masters, elders, and talented beast tamers from all around Xuanyuan Kingdom here to brainstorm on a viable method to tame the Nightmare Beast!" Hall Master Feng explained.

The motive of pushing the competition forward was for this savage beast. Since the competition was already over, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen decided to gather all of the beast tamers here to brainstorm over this matter.

This led to the current commotion outside of the courtyard.

"Oh!" Zhang Xuan came to a realization.

It seemed like the other party didn't think that he would succeed in learning the ancient beast language.

But it was no wonder why the other party would think so. Even with the prowess of the Library of Heaven's Path, Zhang Xuan had only found a few correct words. It would take a miracle for anyone to learn the language through those books.

"Has anyone succeeded yet?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"No one has succeeded yet. A Half-Transcension savage beast is too strong, the possibility of succeeding is extremely low..."

Shaking his head, Hall Master Feng sighed.

Even a 3-star beast tamer like Hall Master Xie Jiuchen was helpless before the Nightmare Beast. How could normal beast tamers like them have any good ideas?

Several ideas were brought up, but they were all refuted.

"Look, the genius Wei Youdao intends to give it a try!"

"Wei Youdao? The genius who managed to reach the third stage of the Ten Beasts Cage yesterday?"

"Yes, that's him..."

...

Just as the trio was talking, a commotion broke out among the crowd. Zhang Xuan turned around and saw a youngster walking toward the Nightmare Beast in the metal cage.

In front of the metal cage stood Hall Master Xie Jiu Chen, Grand

Elder Wei Yuqing, and a few other beast tamers. A grim expression hung on their faces.

They also knew that it was unlikely for anyone to succeed, and they were already prepared for the worst-case scenario.

Chapter 425: Allow Me!

At this moment, the Nightmare Beast was currently lying lazily on the ground. It wasn't even angry; it just couldn't be bothered to lift his head to glance at the other party. Instead, it seemed to be using some kind of unique method to heal the injuries it had sustained.

"Hall Master, I would like to give it a try!"

Walking forward, Wei Youdao clasped his fists.

"Go on!" Glancing at Grand Elder Wei Yuqing, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen nodded.

The grandson of his old friend had been blessed with exceptional talent for beast taming, and the other party had made a name for himself among the younger generation

If not for Zhang Xuan's abrupt appearance, Wei Youdao might very well become the number one genius of Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall's younger generation.

In any case, there was no better solution for the matter at the moment. If the Nightmare Beast were to recover substantially from its injuries, it would be impossible for the Beast Hall to confine it any further. Since that was the case, he might as well grant everyone a chance. Perhaps, someone might just succeed.

"Thank you, hall master!"

Taking a deep breath, Wei Youdao walked up to the Nightmare Beast.

With a flick on his wrist, a jade bottle appeared in his palm.

Uncorking the cap, a dense fragrance wafted out, revitalizing everyone's spirit.

"It's the Seven-colored Honey from the Cloud Mist Mountain!"

"It's said that the Zongshi realm savage beast Heaven Snow Bee concocted this honey from the nectar gathered from seven different colored flowers. It has an alluring fragrance, and it's incomparably sweet. Even spirit beasts would find it difficult to rein in their craving!"

"This thing is incomparably expensive and rare. Even with plenty of spirit stones at hand, obtaining it is no easy matter. Yet, to think that he would have an entire bottle of it!"

"Since he is willing to take even that out, the Nightmare Beast should probably cave in!"

...

Catching a whiff of the fragrance from the jade bottle, a huge

commotion was stirred in the surroundings.

The Seven-colored Honey was formed by seven different colored nectars. It possessed a fragrance that opened up one's pores with a single whiff.

Savage beasts tended to be gluttonous; it would be difficult for the other party to hold back from such a delicacy.

"The Seven-colored Honey is ranked fifth among the ten most favored objects of savage beasts. It is impressive that Wei Youdao was able to obtain such a good item, not bad!"

Hall Master Feng's eyes also lit up.

"Ten most favored objects of savage beasts? There's such a ranking?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He had read nearly all of the books in the Beast Hall, but he had never heard of such a ranking.

"There is!"

Hall Master Feng chuckled. "Actually, we only created this list out of boredom, and it isn't officially recognized by the Beast Hall, so it isn't recorded in any book. Seven-colored Honey isn't just fragrant, more importantly, it has the effect of nourishing and expanding a savage beast's meridians! Usually, if a beast tamer were to take out a single droplet of it, he would be able to induce

Complete Submission in a Zongshi realm savage beast. The jade bottle that Wei Youdao might be small, but there are at least several dozens of droplets in it. He must be truly determined if he is taking so many droplets out at once!"

"Nourish and expand a savage beast's meridians?"

Upon hearing the effects of the Seven-colored Honey, Zhang Xuan was astounded.

The meridians of humans and savage beasts had a certain cross sectional area. If one were to drive one's zhenqi too quickly, it might cause one's zhenqi to seep outward, resulting in severe internal injuries.

Expanding one's meridians was equivalent to increasing the quantity of zhenqi one could drive within a specific period of time. This quality made the Seven-colored Honey extremely valuable. Putting aside savage beasts, even the eyes of the cultivators in the area reddened in desire upon learning of the effects of the Seven-colored Honey,

"What other objects are there in this ranking?" Zhang Xuan couldn't help but ask curiously.

If he were to know the most favored objects of savage beasts, it might help him in taming powerful savage beasts in the future.

"As it's unofficial, it's mostly speculation. The publicly

acknowledged number one object is Dragon Blood, number two is the inner core of spirit beasts, number three is ancient beast blood essence, number four is Godfall Flower, and number five is Seven-colored Honey!"

"I see!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

He had heard of the first four objects.

The Dragon Tribe was incomparably powerful. If a savage beast were to possess the slightest trace of the Dragon Bloodline, it would be significantly stronger than normal savage beasts.

Taking the Nightmare Beast for example, even though the Dragon Bloodline within it was so meagre that it could be disregarded, it still granted it the potential to reach Half-Transcension.

Just this in itself made the Dragon Bloodline a desired object that could send all savage beasts and spirit beasts into a frenzy.

As for the ancient beast blood essence, as shown in the Xuanluo Mountain Range branch, it possessed the same effects as well. If used appropriately, it could induce a Bloodline Evolution in a savage beast.

As for the inner core of a savage beast, it was something that spirit beasts nurture and cultivate day and night over a long period of time. It harnessed the essence of their cultivation and strength.

If a savage beast could obtain it, even if it still wasn't able to make the leap to become a spirit beast, its cultivation would definitely be enhanced significantly.

As for the Godfall Flower, rumor had it that it could nurture a savage beast's spirit.

Of these four incredible objects, the very fact that the Seven-colored Honey could be placed at the fifth place proved testimony to its fearsome effects.

Zhang Xuan couldn't help but take a glance at the situation.

As expected, upon catching a whiff of the fragrance, the lazy Nightmare Beast in the cage was stirred into action. It lifted its massive head, and a glaring radiance pierced from its eyes.

It was clearly interested in the object.

Grabbing the Seven-colored Honey in his hands, Wei Youdao confidently declared, "I know that you understand the human language, and you know our purpose here. As long as you swear to the Dragon Bloodline within your body to remain loyal to the Beast Hall, this bottle of Seven-colored Honey will be yours!"

With this object, he didn't need to resort to any ploy. He only had to state his conditions.

"Roar!"

The Nightmare Beast was initially rather interested in it, but after hearing Wei Youdao's words, it began to lie back down lazily.

"I know that you've attempted a breakthrough to become a spirit beast and failed. The Seven-colored Honey can expand your meridians and heal your wounds. It could help you surpass your bottleneck, so why do you remain so obstinate? Besides, you're only pledging loyalty to the Beast Hall, not to an individual. If you do so, the Beast Hall will surely devote massive resources to your cultivation and your growth... I hope that you can consider this matter!" Wei Youdao said.

Even though his words were moving, the Nightmare Beast remained indifferent.

There was no difference to whom it would pledge loyalty to. In its eyes, it was still becoming the puppet of the humans. Rather than being restricted, it would prefer to venture out and live its life as it pleased.

"Seems like it's a failure!"

The crowd had finally seen a flicker of hope, but upon seeing this sight, their expression sunk again.

They thought that the Seven-colored Honey, ranked fifth on the list, could move the Nightmare Beast. However, they seemed to have underestimate the fellow's control.

"Even though the Seven-colored Honey is irresistible to ordinary savage beasts, this Nightmare Beast isn't too far away from reaching the level of a spirit beast. As such, its effects would be severely limited. On top of that, as a proud bearer of the Dragon Bloodline, how could it serve the humans for just a bit of Seven-colored Honey?"

Among the crowd, a 2-star pinnacle beast tamer commented.

"Indeed. The Dragon Tribe is one of the strongest tribes in the continent, and they have the pride matching their standing. Even though this fellow's bloodline might be weak, it still won't lower its head to humans just over such small benefits. The only way for it to work is to offer it Dragon Blood!"

"Dragon Blood? You must be joking! Do you think that it's that easy to find some? Putting aside how difficult it is to find a member of the Dragon Tribe, even if you manage to find one, it would be impossible to subdue it! Even the weakest of their members is a Half-Transcension, like this Nightmare Beast before us. It isn't a being that normal beast tamers like us can hunt down."

A commotion broke out.

The Beast Taming Competition had gathered dozens of hall masters and elders from the surrounding kingdoms. To be able to become the head of their organizations, their eye of discernment and knowledge far exceeded that of ordinary beast tamers.

The Seven-colored Honey was valuable, but it wasn't sufficient to make a savage beast with a hint of Dragon Bloodline lower its head.

"My apologies!"

After a moment of persuasion, the Nightmare Beast still remained unmoved. In the end, Wei Youdao could only retreat in defeat.

"Is there anyone else who likes to try?"

Expecting this outcome, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen sighed. Turning to the crowd yet again, he asked.

Silence.

Initially, after hearing this news, many people were tempted to give it a try. However, after seeing the 2-star pinnacle and 3-star primary beast tamers falling in defeat, the others lost their courage as well.

"Allow me!"

Suddenly, a faint voice broke the silence.

"It's Beast Tamer Zhang Xuan!"

"Since he managed to clear the Ten Beasts Cage so easily, he must have a deep insight into beast taming. Perhaps, he just might succeed!"

"I don't deny that his beast taming skills are incredible, but his cultivation is way too low!"

"That's true. It's already a formidable feat for a beast tamer to tame a savage beast one or two small cultivation realm above him... He is only at Zongshi realm pinnacle while the other party is at Half-Transcension. That's a total of six small cultivation realms. It's impossible for him to successfully tame it!"

"Indeed. If he were at Zhizun realm pinnacle, it might still be possible. But given his current strength... I don't think that he'll succeed!"

After identifying the source of the voice, the crowd flew into an uproar.

Zhang Xuan's feat of clearing the Ten Beasts Cage had awed everyone in the Beast Hall. Thus, almost everyone here had heard of his name.

His appearance had generated hope in some, but most simply shook their heads grimly.

Beast taming wasn't just about technique, strength also played a

major role.

If one's cultivation realm differed too much from the savage beast, it would only look down on one. Given the lack of respect, how could it possibly allow one to tame it?

"I've heard that he came here to give it a try after clearing the Ten Beasts Cage yesterday, but he failed!"

"Then why is he still volunteering again? Does he have a better idea in mind?"

"I don't know. Let's wait and see then..."

There were some who knew that Zhang Xuan had already attempted yesterday. Even though they didn't know what had happened, given that the Nightmare Beast hadn't been tamed yet, it was clear that he had failed.

"You... succeeded in learning the language?"

Upon seeing Zhang Xuan, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's eyes lit up.

That fellow ran to the library, claiming that he was going to learn the ancient beast language. Yet, he appeared here today. Did it mean that he had succeeded in learning the language?

"Succeed? I'm still far from that..."

Zhang Xuan shook his head.

It wasn't that the ancient beast language was too difficult, but that the level of this Beast Hall was simply too low. There were insufficient books here for the Library of Heaven's Path to work its wonders.

"Then..."

Hearing Zhang Xuan admit that he was still far from success, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen was baffled.

"I've only learned a few sounds, so I would like to give it a try. If it doesn't work, we can try the method I mentioned the previous time!" Zhang Xuan said.

"The method you mentioned?"

Hearing those words, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen fell speechless.

Given how that fellow ran off to the library to study, he thought that he had given up on the idea. To think that he was still harboring those thoughts!

Chapter 426: The Might of the Mysterious Language

"The ancient beast language is expansive and profound. It's impossible to succeed just by learning a few sounds!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing interjected.

The other party said that he would study the language, and he cooped himself in the library for an entire day. Despite everything, Wei Yuqing still bore some expectations of the other party, yet he returned saying that he had only learned a few sounds... Are you here to amuse us?

Even if you had learned the entire ancient beast language, it still remains an uncertainty whether that fellow will listen to you. With just a few sounds, do you think that the other party will bother with you?

You must be joking!

Given Zhang Xuan's declaration of 'Let me try!', they thought that he was very confident of the matter. Yet... to think that he was here just to cause trouble.

Seemed like even top geniuses weren't reliable either...

"If it doesn't work, you all should just think of a way to knock it out!"

Honestly speaking, Zhang Xuan did not have much confidence either, given that he had only learned a few sounds.

"We'll talk about that later. You should give it a try first..."

Afraid that the fellow would continue pestering him on the matter, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen hurriedly interjected.

What the heck is going through your mind!

Just because you managed to tame the Whirlwind Wolves by pummeling them, do you think that the same method will work again?

This is the Nightmare Beast, a top-notch savage beast possessing the Dragon Bloodline, a proud and noble existence. Even if you were to beat it to death, it would not lower its head to you.

If it were that simple, they would have long done it.

"Alright!"

Sensing the other party's reluctance, Zhang Xuan decided to give it a try first. Thus, he took two steps forward to the Nightmare Beast.

The massive savage beast was nonchalant to Zhang Xuan's presence. It didn't even bother taking a glance at him.

"He's starting..."

Wei Youdao clenched his fists tightly.

He had even gone to the extent of taking out the Seven-colored Honey, but it proved to be useless. What kind of solution would the fellow who managed to clear the Ten Beasts Cage come up with?

He stared fixedly at the situation in front with widened eyes, fearful that he would miss out a single detail. However, in the next moment, his lips couldn't help but twitch.

That fellow didn't take out anything of interest to the Nightmare Beast, and instead, he simply frowned. After a long moment of struggling, a bizarre sound suddenly escaped from his throat.

"Gu!"

It sounded like lightning, and no one could understand what it meant.

"This is ancient beast language?"

Wei Youdao didn't comprehend the other party's bizarre action, but Hall Master Xie Jiuchen and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing's face immediately tightened. They hurriedly turned their gazes over to

the Nightmare Beast.

That fellow had gone off to study the ancient beast language previously, so it was likely that this sound was a part of the language.

Even though it was just a single sound, there was an off-chance that it might just work!

Under the intense gazes of the crowd, the lazy Nightmare Beast suddenly opened its eyes...

Then, it yawned lazily, lay down, and fell silent.

"It is ineffective?"

Seeing that it was completely ineffective, Zhang Xuan scratched his head.

Of the ancient beast language, Zhang Xuan had only learned a total of eight words. He had no problem reading or verbalizing it, but as the meaning wasn't written in the books, he couldn't tell what it was either.

In other words, he only knew how to speak those words, he didn't know what they meant at all.

Even if he were to voice out all of them, that fellow still wouldn't

know what he was up to.

"The next one."

Even so, it was still worth a try. Thus, Zhang Xuan opened his mouth once more, "Wu!"

It sounded like the call of an eagle, crisp and bright, piercing one's ears.

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing hurriedly turned their gazes over, but the Nightmare Beast seemed to have fallen into a deeper sleep. With its paws cushioning its head, it lay comfortably on the spot.

"This... So, is it working or not?"

The duo stared at one another in confusion.

If that fellow's ancient beast language was useful, why was there no response from the Nightmare Beast?

But at the same time, the Nightmare Beast did at least adjust its sleeping posture, so whether it was completely useless or not...

Could the sounds that Zhang Xuan was voicing a lullaby...

I thought that you went away to learn the ancient beast language, why did you learn a lullaby instead?

What is the use of your lullaby!

What I want is to tame it, not for it to sleep...

"Ji!"

Amidst their bewilderment, the young man before him voiced the third sound.

This time, not only did the Nightmare Beast get into a comfortable sleeping posture, it even stuck its tongue out, and saliva was flowing out of its mouth.

"The heck!"

"With just three notes, he managed to bring the Nightmare Beast into a deep sleep?"

The surroundings beast tamers were stunned.

They thought that the young genius would use some kind of inconceivable beast taming technique on the Nightmare Beast.

While their thoughts were spot-on, it was completely different

from what they were thinking.

Aren't we supposed to tame it? What do you mean by luring it to sleep?

"Hmm?" Zhang Xuan was baffled as well.

However, upon seeing the sight, his eyes lit up.

"This is good as well. If I can knock it out with these words, I won't have to waste my effort on trying to knock it out!"

Besides the ancient beast language, Zhang Xuan had a backup plan. He could knock the Nightmare Beast out, and through the Library of Heaven's Path, he would be able to determine its flaws and tame it.

But it was a pity that Xie Jiuchen, Wei Yuqing, and the others refused to cooperate with him, and Zhang Xuan wasn't a match for the Nightmare Beast himself. Thus, he had been unable to carry it out. If he could lure it to sleep through the ancient beast language, that would be perfect.

"Wu Ya Hai Wu Wu!"

The more he thought about it, the happier he got. Thus, he voiced out the remaining words all at once.

Hearing those words, the crowd immediately turned their gazes to the Nightmare Beast.

This was especially so for Hall Master Xie Jiuchen. Anxiety could be seen in his eyes.

However, with a single look, he suddenly felt a wave of vertigo striking him.

The drowsy Nightmare Beast abruptly opened its eyes, and its massive body rose up.

Roar!

A deafening roar pierced through the heavens, parting the clouds above. The crowd in the surroundings felt light-headed under the powerful roar.

At the same moment, the massive head suddenly charged straight toward the metal cage.

Weng!

The formation immediately activated, sealing its movements. Even so, under the powerful charge, the sturdy metal cage was bent out of shape, and it seemed as though it would collapse soon.

"This is bad..."

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's eyes narrowed, and his face reflected his astonishment.

He thought that the fellow was still immobile from its severe injuries. To think that he had recovered sufficiently to stand up and exert such offensive might after a few days of recuperation.

But of course, perhaps it was agitated by Beast Tamer Zhang's 'ancient beast language', it seemed to be in an extremely bad mood.

If the Nightmare Beast were to escape under such conditions, the Beast Hall would be in grave danger. Most likely, it might be wiped off the face of the world.

"See what you've done..."

The more Hall Master Xie Jiuchen thought about it, the more furious he became. Thus, he turned around and chastised Zhang Xuan.

What in the world is this?

I asked you here to tame the savage beast, not to provoke it.

"Elders, prepare the [Constellation Beast Confinement Formation]!"

Knowing that it was useless to blame this fellow at this point, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen bellowed.

"Yes!"

The elders of Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall also knew how dangerous the situation was, so they immediately got into action. They hurriedly rushed to their places with a grim expression.

The Constellation Beast Confinement Formation was a powerful formation used to trap savage beasts. Many of the elders in the Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall studied and practiced it. As long as they ran to their allocated location to infuse their zhenqi into the formation, they would be able to activate it even without an in-depth understanding of the formations.

"What's going on?"

"Beast Tamer Zhang seems to have provoked that savage beast?"

"Isn't he here to tame it? How did he end up provoking it instead?"

...

Wei Youdao, Jiang Nanping, and others also felt nervous upon seeing the situation.

That was a Half-Transcension savage beast! Once it went on a rampage, the entire Beast Hall would be reduced to ruins!

Hong hong hong!

Amidst everyone's shocked gazes, the Nightmare Beast threw its body at the metal cage several more times, and a huge hole, through which he could escape, appeared in it.

Weng!

As soon as its head appeared outside, a clear buzz suddenly echoed. The Constellation Beast Confinement Formation had been activated. A white light shot out from the locations of the elders, forming a gigantic net that wrapped itself around the Nightmare Beast.

Trapped by the gigantic net of light, the Nightmare Beast became even more irritated. It howled furiously, and its giant claws grabbed at empty air.

Tzzzzzz!

White energy emanations reminiscent of sword qi shot out from the claws of the Nightmare Beast, striking straight at the net trapping it.

The net tremored violently, and as though a shield struck by a powerful hammer, a deep reverberation sounded.

Pu! Pu!

Under the massive force, some of the elders standing at the center of the formation spat out large mouthfuls of blood.

Half-Transcension savage beasts were already an extremely strong existence, and this fellow possessed the Dragon Bloodline on top of that. Its immense strength allowed it to match up to even a Transcendent Mortal expert. Even though the elders were strong as well, most of them were only at Zhizun realm intermediate and advanced stage. They weren't a match for this fellow at all.

"Hurry up and infuse more zhenqi in to reinforce the formation..."

Seeing that the Nightmare Beast was about to escape, Xie Jiuchen panicked. He hurriedly called for help.

As soon as the formation collapses, the entire Beast Hall would surely be destroyed. They could not back away at this point.

Hong long!

Knowing the severity of the issue, most of the elders immediately got into action. They charged forward and infused all of their zhenqi into the formation.

Accompanying the furious surge of zhenqi into the formation, the darkened net suddenly glowed brilliantly once more.

While the formation had been strengthened, the Nightmare Beast seemed to have derived strength from its rage as well. Roaring furiously once more, its lower limbs pushed against the ground, and its massive body struck the massive net in midair.

Si la!

Under the violent power contained in the massive body, the Beast Confinement Net caved in and was torn apart.

Deng deng deng deng!

All of the elders who had operated the formation collapsed onto the floor with pale faces.

Hu!

After escaping from the formation, the Nightmare Beast glared at Zhang Xuan with widened eyes. Carrying unparalleled strength in its body, it charged swiftly toward him.

"It's over..."

Seeing that the formation and metal cage had failed to contain the Nightmare Beast, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's face was ghastly

pale.

He didn't expect that the savage beast would suddenly go on a rampage in the midst of the beast taming process.

Given that so many people were unable to withstand the might of the Nightmare Beast, no matter how talented Beast Tamer Zhang was, he would surely be torn to shreds.

"Moo!"

Knowing that it was impossible to save the other party, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen was about to avert his gaze when the young man released another bizarre sound.

Xie Jiuchen staggered.

It was precisely because of your random babbling that provoked this fellow. Yet, to think that you wouldn't learn your lesson...

Are you that intent to die?

Just as Hall Master Xie Jiuchen was about to urge Zhang Xuan to hurry up and leave instead of continuing to dabble in the ancient beast language or whatever it was, he saw the Nightmare Beast suddenly kneeling onto the floor after hearing the sound. It stuck out its tongue, and it licked the young man all over. Its appearance... was no different from the Whirlwind Wolves back then.

"Word of Submission, Bloodline Suppression... Could this be the True Voice of Dragons?"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's eyes narrowed, and his face paled.

"What in the world was going on?"

Chapter 427: True Voice of Dragons

The True Voice of Dragons was a language that only ancient Pureblooded Dragons were capable of using. As long as one's Dragon Bloodline didn't reach the level of a Pureblooded Dragon, a single word would cause a suppression from its bloodline, forcing it into submission.

The Nightmare Beast was still baring its fangs at Beast Tamer Zhang previously, but at the very next moment, it suddenly fell to the floor and became as tame as a pup. If this wasn't the language depicted in the legends, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen had no idea what other languages were capable of such a feat.

But... didn't this language disappear along with the Dragon Tribe, its heritage lost?

How did he learn of it?

More importantly... Even if the members of the Dragon Tribe were to impart the True Voice of Dragons to him, it was impossible for humans to learn it.

This was not just a matter of talent. Even if one possessed superior zhenqi, the human body was still unable to withstand its sharp notes.

This sound had to travel through all of the meridians within one's body and harmonize all of one's acupoints before it could be produced. Even if one cultivated the most profound cultivation

technique, it was impossible for one to open up all of their meridians and acupoints!

"Can it really be... that he's the True Incarnation of Dragons?"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen narrowed his eyes, and his body trembled uncontrollably.

Legends had it that the Dragon Tribe traveled across the world, and they took on many forms. Some became beasts, some became humans, some became spirits, some became monsters... No one could discern their true identity.

Just by pummeling the Whirlwind Wolves, the latter immediately submitted to him and fawned on him; with a single fist, he caused the Tiger Head Beasts to play dead; with just a few words, he made the Steel-armed Golden Ape waved him goodbye, as though buddies with decades of history behind them...

If he isn't a True Incarnation of Dragons, how can he possibly achieve such ridiculous feats?

Even 5-star beast tamers are incapable of such a feat!

"Regardless of whether he is one, I mustn't reveal this matter... Otherwise, I'll surely be silenced!"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's face paled.

The members of the Dragon Tribe were incomparably strong, and from birth, they were granted with powerful destructive might.

If this Beast Tamer Zhang was a True Incarnation of Dragons, and he exposed the other party's true identity when he wished to conceal the fact, he might incur the wrath and killing intent of the other party to himself.

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's conjectures caused his face to slowly pale in fear.

On the other hand, the crowd, baffled by the sight before them, was about to go insane from bewilderment.

The rage of the Nightmare Beast was not feigned in the least; even the grade-3 pinnacle formation maintained by so many elders was torn apart. Its might was truly fearsome.

Yet, this strong, proud fellow was suddenly lying on the floor, licking the other party's pants... What in the world happened in between?

"What is it doing?"

"I've no idea. Could it be that... there's something about Beast Tamer Zhang's pants that's even more delicious than the Seven-colored Honey? Is that why it's licking it non-stop?"

"It can't be that... it has been tamed? But even if it's tamed, it couldn't possibly have changed its attitude so quickly!"

...

Some of the older beast tamers tore their beards out, but their minds were too preoccupied for them to feel pain.

The sight before them was simply too frightening.

In the blink of an eye, a Half-Transcension savage beast, who was thinking of slaughtering everyone here just a moment ago, was suddenly lying so docilely on the floor. No one could accept this abrupt twist.

"With a scream... this fellow was tamed?"

Wei Youdao, Jiang Nanping, and the others stared at one another, and their heads were about to burst from shock.

Wei Youdao had taken out the Seven-colored Honey, which was ranked fifth on the list, but even so, he was disregarded. Just when they thought that this haughty fellow could never be tamed... Beast Tamer Zhang simply cried out a word, and that fellow immediately sprawled on the floor and fawned on the other party, as though afraid that the other party would not take him in...

When did a Half-Transcension savage beast become so shameless?

Was it insane, or were our eyes playing tricks on us?

"Hmm?"

In truth, Zhang Xuan was dumbfounded as well.

Previously, when he accidentally agitated the Nightmare Beast through the ancient beast language, he was anxious as well.

He only gave that bizarre language a try, especially since he could escape with the Heaven's Path Movement Art if he failed. He didn't think that the other party's attitude would change completely after hearing it.

If only he'd known before those words were so formidable, he wouldn't have wasted his effort with the ancient beast language.

Glancing at the massive head, which kept cuddling itself up to him, Zhang Xuan suppressed his astonishment and asked, "You wish to submit to me?"

"Roar!"

The Nightmare Beast hurriedly nodded its head.

"This..." Even though the other party had admitted to the matter, Zhang Xuan was still a little dumbfounded.

Wasn't it being... a little too easy?

"Then... let's establish the contract then!"

Even though Zhang Xuan was bewildered, he knew that this was a good opportunity. Touching the other party's head, he drew a droplet of blood from the tip of his forefinger.

As though fearing that Zhang Xuan would change his mind, the Nightmare Beast hurriedly swallowed it with a contented look.

After which, Zhang Xuan felt a will being bound to his own, allowing him to communicate with the other party.

"This is... Complete Submission?"

The beast tamers in the surroundings felt light-headed.

Just by shouting a few bizarre sounds, the other party actually succeeded. When did taming a Half-Transcension savage beast become so easy?

"To think that we even thought about competing with him..."

Many of the geniuses of the younger generation were on the verge of tears.

Even though Zhang Xuan had passed the Ten Beasts Cage, there were still a few who refused to concede.

However, upon seeing this sight... they realized that the difference in their capability was simply too vast...

Even Hall Master Xie Jiuchen, a 3-star beast tamer, was unable to succeed, yet, in just a dozen breaths or so, the other party was already done. This feat was so incredible that it felt that it could not have been done by a human.

"This is a truly master beast tamer!"

Someone amidst the crowd sighed.

Hearing those words, the rest nodded their heads in agreement.

Most probably, only masters of this level would be capable of taming the Nightmare Beast so easily and clear the Ten Beasts Cage in half a tea's time...

Everyone turned their gazes toward the 'master', curious to see how he would do now that he had established a contract... only to see the other party walking toward Hall Master Xie Jiuchen.

"Hall Master Xie, I've already tamed this fellow, so twenty droplets of spirit beast blood essence... Wait, you said that you're going to give me ten more. When will you be passing those to me?"

"Spirit beast blood essence..."

Xie Jiuchen's body swayed, and his mouth twitched.

When I told you to tame this Nightmare Beast, I meant that you should convince it to serve the Beast Hall as the organization's tamed beast.

Yet... not only did you take it for yourself, you even have to cheek to ask for compensation...

Can you be more reasonable?

It is just like I have asked you to help me court a beautiful lady that I met with much difficulty, and yet, you seduced her for yourself... and you even expect me to pay you for it...

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen felt so stifled inside that he was on the verge of throwing up blood.

You cannot be so unreasonable...

"Beast Tamer Zhang, you have tamed the Nightmare Beast to become your tamed beast. Isn't it inappropriate for you to expect

us to pay you spirit beast blood essence like that?"

Seeing the hall master go speechless from rage, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing could not help but interject.

"Inappropriate? Didn't I tame the Nightmare Beast?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"That's right..."

"Didn't you say that you'll pay me the spirit beast blood essence as long as I tame it?" Zhang Xuan continued.

"Yes..."

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen was on the verge of tears.

Initially, he thought that no matter how formidable this fellow was, he was only a Zongshi realm pinnacle cultivator. Given how the Nightmare Beast disregarded even them, how could it possibly submit to such a weak fellow?

Never in their dreams did they expect that the other party would really succeed...

"Since you've agreed to it, then we should get it over and done with. Otherwise... I'll go and clear the Ten Beasts Cage!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Forget it. Grand Elder Wei, go and fetch the spirit beast blood essence.

The corner of Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's lips twitched, and he hurriedly waved his hands.

There was no way to undo the matter of the Nightmare Beast anymore. On the other hand, if that fellow were to continue challenging the Ten Beasts Cage, it would not be long before all of the savage beasts in the Beast Hall would become his...

If that truly happened, then as the hall master of the Beast Hall, he would become a huge laughingstock...

"Alright!"

Even though Grand Elder Wei Yuqing felt frustrated as well, he still fulfilled the hall master's command. A moment later, he returned with a jade bottle in his hands.

Taking the jade bottle over, Zhang Xuan uncapped the lid and took a look. Scarlet blood flowed within the container, and it filled up to half of the bottle. Making a rough estimation, he confirmed there were around thirty droplets inside.

"Great!"

Zhang Xuan's purpose at the Beast Hall was this. Having obtained what he wanted, Zhang Xuan happily placed the bottle into his storage ring.

Seeing the sight, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's heart bled.

Despite the huge accumulation of Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall over a span of a thousand years, it only had around fifty droplets here. Having more than half of it taken away in an instant, he could not help but feel a sense of loss.

However, upon thinking that it was possible for the other party to be a True Incarnation of Dragons, he hurriedly pushed down his displeasure.

"Alright, there's no use for you to follow me. You might as well submit to the Beast Hall and stay here! As long as you agree to it, I'll take care of the afflictions you are suffering from. It's also not entirely impossible for me to help you become a spirit beast!"

Oblivious to Hall Master Xie Jiuchen's reactions, Zhang Xuan turned to the Nightmare Beast and waved his hands casually.

This fellow was strong, but it was not capable of flying. Thus, its usability was limited to Zhang Xuan.

Xuanyuan Kingdom was only a temporary resting point. Zhang Xuan had to reach the Myriad Kingdom Alliance within three months, and it would be impossible for him to take the other party

along. Since that was the case, he might as well sell a favor to the Beast Hall.

Of course, if the other party had not given the spirit beast blood essence to him, he would've rather let the Nightmare Beast loose than help tame it for the Beast Hall.

In the end, Zhang Xuan was no Samaritan. If the other party had reneged on his promise, why should he help them?

"You... What did you say? You want the Nightmare Beast to submit to our Beast Hall?"

Initially, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen was displeased by the other party's extortion, but upon hearing his words, his breathing hastened in agitation.

"Un!"

Zhang Xuan waved his hands casually.

"This..." Hall Master Xie Jiuchen and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing were stunned. Their eyes slowly turned red.

This was a Half-Transcension savage beast! If anyone of them were to tame it, it would be impossible for them to give it up. Yet, this fellow was saying that he would give it to them. Wasn't he being too generous?

They thought that the other party was a selfish and greedy person who only knew how to extort from others. However, Zhang Xuan's actions had changed their opinion of him.

Perhaps, he really might have some urgent use for the spirit beast blood essence.

A Half-Transcension savage beast which possessed the potential to make the breakthrough to become a spirit beast was clearly much more valuable than thirty droplets of spirit beast blood essence. In fact, even a hundred droplets would still be unable to match up to its value.

Since the other party was willing to give away such a formidable savage beast directly, how could he possibly be a greedy person?

"We... We misunderstood him. Geniuses have their own pride, so how could he possibly act dishonorably just for this bit of interest..."

A thought suddenly appeared in their heads. The impression the two had of Beast Tamer Zhang immediately went through a 180-degree reversal.

But at that moment, the young man before them suddenly spoke up hesitantly, "Oh, right... Since I convinced the Nightmare Beast to submit to Beast Hall, shouldn't you all offer some token of appreciation? For example, spirit stones, pills, medicinal herbs, or that sort. I wouldn't mind a carriage or two of them..."

"..." Hall Master Xie Jiuchen and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing.

Chapter 428: Uncle Sun Qiang Is Here (1)

We are the Beast Hall, not some spirit stone mining clan. How much of wealth do you think we possess?

Still a carriage or two... Just a few dozen would already be almost their entire stock...

As for pills, medicinal herbs, and the sort, even if the Beast Hall had them, they are mainly reserved for the savage beasts. How in the world are we going to find so many for you?

They had just thought that this fellow was generous when he gave himself in right after...

"Beast Tamer Zhang, you must be jesting. It's not that we don't want to give those to you, we simply don't have that many resources here..." Hall Master Xie Jiuchen replied with a reddened face.

"It's alright if you don't have those. However, there's something that I really require, and I hope that you won't turn me down!" Zhang Xuan turned to look at them.

"Feel free to speak!"

"I need over a thousand Half-Zhizun and Zhizun realm cultivation technique manuals. There are no requirements to their quality, and the more there are, the better it is!" Zhang Xuan said.

Zhang Xuan's motive wasn't spirit stones or medicinal herbs, but this.

Only with sufficient cultivation technique could he form the Zhizun realm Heaven's Path Divine Art and achieve a breakthrough.

No matter what, if he wanted to avenge Lu Chong, he would require strength.

"A thousand Half-Zhizun and Zhizun realm cultivation technique manuals?"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen blinked.

What did he need those for?

It's not like you could boil cultivation techniques together to make a stew... On top of that, to demand nothing of their quality.

"This is simple, I can prepare them for you. However, I'll require at least three days!" After pondering for a moment, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen nodded.

Zhizun realm cultivation techniques were valuable in Tianwu Kingdom, and it was nigh impossible to find even a single one in the market. However, in Xuanyuan Kingdom, most clans would

possess several books. Collecting a thousand of them was troublesome, but with the connections of the Beast Hall, it would not be too difficult.

"Fine!"

Hearing that it was possible for the other party to collect all of them, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief.

With this, he had met two main goals he had at the Beast Hall, spirit beast blood essence and cultivation technique manuals.

"Alright, I'll cure your wounds now!"

Zhang Xuan turned to look at the Nightmare Beast.

The fellow had suffered some afflictions when it failed in its breakthrough to Transcendent Mortal realm. Previously, Zhang Xuan had promised to treat it as part of his deal, so it was time for him to fulfill the end of his bargain.

"Roar!"

The Nightmare Beast knew that it would not be able to follow behind Zhang Xuan once its injuries had recovered, so it howled in reluctance.

The other party was an expert capable of producing the True

Voice of Dragons. If it were to follow behind him, it would surely be able to reach great heights in the future.

Staying at this Beast Hall meant losing this great opportunity.

However, the master had already made his stand. Contractually-bound to Zhang Xuan, it did not dare to protest.

"For me to solve your problem, I've to know what problems you are suffering from first!"

Ignoring its unhappiness, Zhang Xuan glanced at it and said, "Alright... Knock yourself out!"

"Roar???"

The Nightmare Beast widened its eyes in bewilderment.

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen and Grand Elder Wei Yuqing were speechless as well.

It seemed like this fellow had not given up his intention of knocking the Nightmare Beast out...

"What are you roaring for, hurry up!"

Zhang Xuan chastised with a slight frown.

He had no time to waste here, he needed to make use of his time to cultivate Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan.

"Roar~~~~"

It stared at Zhang Xuan pleadingly, but upon seeing the other party's determined gaze, it gritted its teeth before striking its massive hand on its head.

Padah!

The sight before it turned dark, and it passed out.

If Xie Jiuchen and the others wanted to knock it out, they would probably have to go through a huge hassle. It was much simpler for it to do the work itself.

"What is it doing?"

"What's happening?"

When the Nightmare Beast barged out of its cage, the other beast tamers immediately retreated far away. Thus, they missed out on the conversation of the others. However, upon seeing the huge fellow knock itself out, bizarre expressions appeared on their faces.

"Beast Tamer Zhang is about to treat that huge fellow!"

Hall Master Feng and Beast Tamer Wang chuckled.

"Treat?" Luo Tang, Fang Jin, and the others were bewildered.

One had to knock out savage beasts before treating them?

"This is Beast Tamer Zhang's unique diagnosis method, the Unconscious Treatment Method!" Hall Master Feng explained.

"Unconscious Treatment Method? Beast Pummeling Taming Method... What the heck is with his techniques?"

The duo found themselves at the end of their tolerance for this insanity.

They had seen many eccentric things in this world, but such a bizarre sight was one they could have never imagined.

Ever since they were apprentice beast tamers, there was an iron-clad rule seared deep in their minds: To tame a savage beast, one must cultivate an intimate relationship with it, and conflicts are a huge taboo.

Yet...

Yet, the Beast Pummeling Taming Method and Unconscious Treatment Method...

If anyone else were to try pummeling a savage beast, they would definitely be beaten to death. Yet, not only was this fellow still in perfect condition, he even managed to get the savage beast to submit to it...

Just by thinking about it made them feel stifled.

Amidst everyone's bewildered and gloomy gazes, Zhang Xuan had already touched the Nightmare Beast and formed a corresponding book. Flipping through it, he found the root of the fellow's illness.

"Indeed, he suffered severe injuries from his failed breakthrough. Not only are his meridians injured, his internal organs are also damaged. He will require the nourishment of medicinal herbs... I'll write down a prescription for you now. If you were to treat him, it'll help you in earning his good will!" Zhang Xuan said.

This fellow was indeed severely injured. After all, if that wasn't the case, it would have been impossible for the Beast Hall to capture him.

On top of that, he overexerted himself previously, exacerbating his injuries.

Even though Zhang Xuan could treat it without the Library of Heaven's Path given his current level of medical knowledge, he would be only able to treat its symptoms, not the root of its illness.

Knowing the specific location of the injuries had made it much simpler to cure the Nightmare Beast. However, to heal it to the point that it could try for Transcendent Mortal realm once more would still take at least half a year.

Of course, if Zhang Xuan were to use his Heaven's Path zhenqi, the other party's recovery rate would be boosted.

However, Zhang Xuan's current cultivation realm was far too lacking as compared to the other party. Putting aside the doubt of the effectiveness of the Heaven's Path zhenqi under such circumstances, there was a chance that Zhang Xuan's pure zhenqi might be revealed, and this would bring him a whole string of trouble.

Thus, he would rather dump the problem on the Beast Hall. In any case, this would also serve as a platform for them to strike up a relationship with the Nightmare Beast.

"Yes!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen nodded.

Zhang Xuan took out a piece of a paper and a brush, and started writing down a prescription. The main ingredient of the prescription just so happened to be Wei Youdao's Seven-colored Honey.

He was only responsible for providing the prescription. As for how the other party would negotiate the matter, that was no longer a matter for him to worry over.

"I need a quiet chamber!"

After dealing with this matter, Zhang Xuan raised his request.

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen did not dare to keep Zhang Xuan waiting. He hurriedly prepared a quiet and spacious residence for him.

This Beast Tamer Zhang had successfully cleared the Ten Beasts Cage. Just that in itself was sufficient reason for the Beast Hall to give him a residence already.

Not to mention, the other party even tamed the Nightmare Beast and gave it to the Beast Hall. It would be hard for the Beast Hall to return this debt.

After settling Zhao Ya and the others in, Zhang Xuan turned to Hall Master Xie Jiuchen and asked, "Right, Hall Master Xie, may I trouble you on another matter?"

"Feel free to speak!" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen chuckled.

Despite this fellow's young age, Xie Jiuchen already viewed him as a fellow peer, or perhaps, even a senior.

Putting all things aside, just the fact that Beast Tamer Zhang was able to tame the Nightmare Beast so easily and produce the True Voice of Dragons showed that his capability was far beyond his.

"May I trouble you to assign a person to escort a friend of mine to Gale Valley of the Duskfall Mountains?"

Zhang Xuan called Sun Qiang over by gesturing to him.

"Duskfall Mountains... Gale Valley? You are going to the... Poison Hall?" Hall Master Xie Jiuchen narrowed his eyes.

The Xuanyuan Kingdom Poison Hall branch was well-hidden, and very few people knew of its exact position. Even so, as the head of the Beast Hall, Xie Jiuchen was well-informed on such matters.

It was in Gale Valley!

That region was usually forbidden lands for ordinary cultivators. Why was Beast Tamer Zhang sending his subordinate over?

"You know of the Poison Hall as well? Indeed, I need him to make a trip for me!"

Zhang Xuan chuckled.

"But... the surrounding area of the Poison Hall is treacherous land..." Hall Master Xie Jiuchen tried to talk Zhang Xuan out of it.

The Poison Hall had a horrible reputation, and there were many casualties under them. To abruptly pay a visit was an extremely

dangerous affair.

More importantly, this subordinate of his was only at Dingli realm!

"Ah, I have a friend at the Poison Hall, and I just need Sun Qiang to look for him in my stead. There won't be any danger, so you don't have to worry! It's just that I need someone to protect him on the way to avoid unnecessary trouble," Zhang Xuan explained.

Back then, when Gu Mu left, he had left Zhang Xuan with a token, saying that he could bring it to look for him when he needed help.

Since Zhang Xuan was going against the Xuanyuan royal family now, he needed all the help he could get.

However, Zhang Xuan urgently needed to cultivate now so that he could gain sufficient strength to exact his vengeance. Thus, after much contemplation, he decided to send Sun Qiang over.

This fellow might be arrogant, but he was able to retain his composure even before experts like Su Fan and Ling Yuheng. As such, he was in a much better position than Zhao Ya and the others.

"Alright then! I'll go make preparations!"

Hearing that Zhang Xuan had a friend at the Poison Hall, Hall

Master Xie Jiuchen hesitated for a moment before eventually nodding his head.

Then, after the other party left, Zhang Xuan turned around to face Sun Qiang.

"Butler Sun, I have something I require your help on."

"Young master, feel free to speak!" Sun Qiang hurriedly clasped his fist.

As the sole direct disciple of the old master, Sun Qiang had to obey Zhang Xuan's commands.

"Take this token, visit a poison master named Gu Mu in the Gale Valley Poison Hall and have him meet me at Xuanyuan Kingdom!" Zhang Xuan instructed, taking out a token.

"Alright!" Sun Qiang nodded his head. "May I know if this Gu Mu is young master's friend? How should I address him?"

Zhang Xuan had never told anyone about the happenings in the Poison Hall, so Sun Qiang did not know about the matter.

"Oh, this Gu Mu... is my teacher's grandstudent, meaning, my junior nephew!" Zhang Xuan replied.

Initially, Zhang Xuan was going to say that the other party was

his grandstudent, but if the other party were to find out his senior granduncle was not even twenty yet, he would surely bear doubts. Thus, he might as well push the identity of the elusive expert to his 'teacher'.

In any case, his 'teacher' had always been an unfathomable figure. Adding an additional layer of secrecy to his identity did not mean anything much at this point.

"The old master's grandstudent?" Sun Qiang's eyes lit up.

He did not expect the old master to be so formidable as to have a grandstudent in the Poison Hall.

"As a servant of the old master, even if I am of inferior standing to the old master, I am at least of the same standing as the young master! Since that Gu Mu lad is the old master's grandstudent, young master's junior nephew, that means that he's my junior as well..." Sun Qiang thought. "As his senior, it's only right for him to run over as soon as he's called. Besides, as his senior, he should at least welcome me grandly with good alcohol and meat!"

The more he thought about it, the more satisfied Sun Qiang felt with the job he was assigned.

Seeing the other party's delighted expression, Zhang Xuan warned, "The Poison Hall is a dangerous place, so be careful!"

"Young master, rest assured!" Sun Qiang nodded.

"I'll leave a surge of zhenqi with you just in case someone tries to poison you. At the very least, you'll be able to protect yourself this way!"

After a moment of hesitation, Zhang Xuan flicked his finger, and a surge of Heaven's Path zhenqi flew through the other party's meridians, seeped into his dantian, and lay dormant within.

Chapter 429: Uncle Sun Qiang Is Here (2)

Zhang Xuan's Zongshi realm Heaven's Path zhenqi could neutralize all poisons of grade-3 and below.

It was hard to tell what kind of dangers Sun Qiang would meet, so it was best for him to be careful.

With this surge of zhenqi, Sun Qiang should be able to protect himself from the poison of ordinary poison masters.

"Thank you, young master!"

Knowing that the young master was doing this for his safety, Sun Qiang bowed in gratitude.

After the last few days of fellowship, he knew that even though the young master might be inferior to the old master, he was also a man of great capability.

Since he decided to do so, he must have his own considerations.

After explaining the method of triggering the surge of zhenqi and ensuring that the other party understood his words, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief.

Even though Sun Qiang was a little coarse, his ability to get things done was reliable. All along, he had been able to reliably

accomplish the tasks Zhang Xuan entrusted to him, saving him a lot of hassle.

'Yang shi' was an unfathomable, advanced master teacher, and the butler of such a figure had to possess a befitting disposition. Even though Sun Qiang's cultivation was so-so, he had been able to play the role of a butler perfectly.

Otherwise, Zhang Xuan would not have gone through the trouble of bringing him here from Tianxuan Kingdom.

"These are a few pills beneficial to your cultivation. Remember to cultivate hard even when traveling."

With a flick of his wrist, Zhang Xuan took out several pills that he obtained from the Lin Clan and passed them over.

"Yes!" Sun Qiang hurriedly received them.

He was no fool. Given that his cultivation was already lagging behind, he knew that if he did not work harder, he would soon lose his value.

While Zhang Xuan was delegating a few more points for Sun Qiang to take note of, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen returned with an elder before him. It was Wei Yuqing,

"The Poison Hall is dangerous, and after much consideration, I decided to assign Elder Wei to follow him. This way, his safety can

be guaranteed!" Hall Master Xie said.

On top of being a 3-star beast tamer, Wei Yuqing was a Zhizun realm pinnacle expert. Other than Xie Jiuchen, he was the strongest person in the entire Beast Hall. Also, he possessed the deepest understanding of the affairs of the Poison Hall as well.

It should be safer for him to escort Beast Tamer Zhang's subordinate.

Beast Tamer Zhang was an important guest of the Beast Hall. On top of that, they had yet to fully tame the Nightmare Beast. Thus, no matter what, they had to protect the other party's subordinate well.

"I'll be depending on Elder Wei then!"

Zhang Xuan clasped his fist.

"Don't worry!" Wei Yuqing nodded with a smile. "Even though I've never been to the Poison Hall, I've heard some rumors about it. If it's just looking for someone, there won't be any danger!"

As long as they weren't going to the Poison Hall to wreak havoc, it should be fine.

After all, even though poison masters were formidable, beast tamers, as a member of the Upper Nine Paths, were not to be trifled with either.

"Un!" Since Grand Elder Wei Yuqing was making a move personally, Zhang Xuan felt reassured.

The duo left on an aerial savage beast. After trading some pleasantries with Zhang Xuan, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen took his leave.

The Nightmare Beast had awoken, and he had to make use of this opportunity to strike up an intimate relationship with the latter before it recovered fully.

"Time to start!"

After the crowd left, Zhang Xuan found a quiet room, conditioned himself, and sat down cross-legged.

With his recent gains, he should have sufficient spirit beast blood essence to reach Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan.

After adjusting his state, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist, and a few droplets of spirit beast blood essence appeared in his palm.

There was a dense concentration of spiritual energy in the room. This was a unique cultivation chamber in the residence, and a spiritual energy gathering formation had been set up here.

Closing his eyes, Zhang Xuan began to drive his zhenqi according

to the formula stated within the Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan. Then, with a flick of his finger, the blood droplets suddenly turned into a mist, permeating into the pores throughout Zhang Xuan's body.

The spirit beast blood essence was the essence of the blood extracted from a spirit beast. Even though it wasn't as valuable as inner cores, harnessed within every droplet was the very essence of a spirit beast. The energy contained in every droplet was even purer and denser than those in spirit stones.

A huge spiral formed within his body, taking in all of the energy within the blood to nourish every single cell within him.

"The effects are indeed significantly less effective than before..."

Taking a look at his body after absorbing the first batch of spirit beast blood essence, Zhang Xuan frowned.

Along with the rise in his strength, the requirement on the spirit beast blood essence would increase as well. In the past, a single drop could induce massive improvements, but now, its effects had been greatly cut.

But in any case, Zhang Xuan had sufficient spirit blood essence in his possession, so he had no worries.

Based on his previous calculations, twenty droplets of spirit beast blood essence should be sufficient for him to reach Zhizun realm

pinnacle.

As long as his strength reached that level, it would be possible for him to face even a Half-Transcension cultivator through the Eye of Insight and Library of Heaven's Path.

He would be able to exact vengeance then.

Tzzzz!

Under the effects of the Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan, the constitution of Zhang Xuan's muscles was modified, augmenting his physical strength immensely.

Boom!

After an unknown period of time, with the sound of an explosion, Zhang Xuan seemed to have broken a shackle binding his body. It felt as though he was submerged in a tub of hot water, and a feeling of relaxation spread all over him.

Finally, he had broken through the 9999 ding bottleneck to reach the level of Zhizun realm!

Even though there was only a single ding of difference between 9999 ding and 10,000 ding, it set apart the boundary between a Half-Zhizun and Zhizun. With this leap, one's level of existence became completely different.

Zhizun was the peak of the Fighter realm. Regardless of whether it was one's physical body, spirit, or energy, one would be approaching the limits of a human at this realm.

Only when one had reached this realm could one attempt to break their mortal limits to become a Transcendent Mortal. Upon success, their lifespan and strength would be enhanced immensely.

If one could not even take the step to Zhizun realm, one would be doomed to remain as a mortal for life. One could only watch helplessly as time left its mark on one.

In other words, it was the stepping stone to becoming a true expert.

Many cultivators found themselves locked outside of its gates, unable to take the final step in, and thus, dying in regret.

After previously absorbing the two droplets of spirit beast blood essence, Zhang Xuan also found himself stuck before this hurdle, unable to raise his strength by that final ding to push through the next realm no matter how he cultivated.

However, with sufficient blood essence in his hands, he could finally take that final step.

With the breakthrough in his cultivation, Zhang Xuan's reaction speed and senses were enhanced immensely.

His vision became much sharper and clearer.

As expected of the top realm of a Fighter. Just the breakthrough in his physical body had brought him many benefits.

Even though his strength was just increased by a single ding, his overall fighting prowess rose by almost two folds.

If he were to fight with the Steel-armed Golden Ape once more, even without the Library of Heaven's Path, he would be able to crush it easily with just his strength.

This was Zhizun realm!

"Finally!"

Knowing that it would be easier to raise his cultivation now, having broken through his bottleneck, Zhang Xuan frenziedly absorbed the spirit beast blood essence within the jade bottle and drove the Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan. Once again, his strength rose at a rate visible to the eye.

10,100 ding!

10,200 ding!

10,300 ding!

...

30,000 ding!

In just a single day, Zhang Xuan reached 30,000 ding straight, granting him strength equivalent to a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert.

At this moment, he had already expended a total of eighteen drops of spirit beast blood essence.

"The expenditure is greater than I'd expected..."

He thought that it would only take at most ten droplets for him to reach Zhizun realm advanced stage, but contrary to his expectations, it took eighteen instead. That was far beyond his estimations.

It was fortunate that he received ten additional droplets from Hall Master Xie. With twelve droplets remaining, it should be sufficient for him to push to Zhizun realm pinnacle.

"Continue!"

Taking a deep breath, Zhang Xuan closed his eyes and continued cultivating.

...

While Zhang Xuan was in seclusion, Sun Qiang had finally arrived at the Gale Valley in the Duskfall Mountains after half a day of traveling.

Similar to the Red Lotus Range, it extended far beyond the horizon, and the Poison Hall was hidden somewhere amidst this vast plot of lush greenery.

If one didn't know the exact location of the Poison Hall, putting aside finding it, one would probably end up dead at the hands of the powerful savage beasts prowling around or from the poisonous mist which lingered in the air.

"Be careful!"

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing took out an antidote pill in advance.

The duo abandoned the aerial savage beast and began proceeding through the mountain valley on foot.

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing's strength of Zhizun realm pinnacle made the weaker savage beasts dare not approach him. On top of that, he was an experienced veteran, and under his guide, the duo avoided most of the danger.

After a day of walking, having circled around innumerable savage beasts and poisonous mist, a massive infrastructure

appeared before them.

Countless tall dark-gray stone buildings reminiscent of ancient relics clustered around it.

The layout was similar to the Red Lotus Range Poison Hall, but it was clearly larger and grander. There were all kinds of formidable formations laid out in the area.

After circling around a massive boulder, they finally arrived at the entrance.

Before they could walk in, they seemed to have triggered some kind of mechanism. Jiya! A loud rumbling echoed, and immediately afterward, the ringing of bells sounded.

Huala!

A few poison masters wearing long robes appeared before the duo.

Even though Poison Hall was well-hidden and no one would easily attempt to besiege it, it was still one of the most hated and feared occupations in the continent. As such, they went to the extent of building a strong defensive system.

"Who dares to barge into the Poison Hall?"

A young man walked forward as he assessed the two intruders with a cold gaze.

These few people seemed to be in their thirties, and they had all reached Zongshi realm, and the young man who spoke had even reached Zongshi realm pinnacle.

But of course, what was fearsome about poison masters wasn't their strength but their ability to utilize poison.

Even though they were only at Zongshi realm, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing didn't dare to underestimate them.

"I am a 3-star beast tamer from the Beast Hall, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing. I'm here to seek a friend!"

Wei Yuqing stepped forward and clasped his hands.

After a day of accompaniment, Wei Yuqing realized that Sun Qiang was only at Dingli realm. It was likely that the poison masters would simply disregard his presence so he chose to take on the job of interacting with the other party.

"An elder from the Beast Hall?"

Taken aback, a grim look slowly surfaced on the young man.

Even though they rarely interacted with the outside world,

poison masters still roughly knew the various powers out in the world. Given that the other party was an elder of the Beast Hall, his strength was most probably at Zhizun realm pinnacle. This wasn't a figure that they could trifle with.

"May I know which poison master within our Poison Hall you are looking for?"

The young man replied politely.

"It's a poison master named Gu Mu!" Sun Qiang said.

"Gu Mu?"

The young man was taken aback by Sun Qiang's words, and a furrow slowly appeared on his forehead. "You're looking for Hall Master Gu Mu?"

"Hall master?"

Sun Qiang and Wei Yuqing were dumbstruck.

Wei Yuqing knew that they were here to look for Zhang Xuan's junior nephew... He thought that the other party would just be some unknown poison master, to think that he would be the head of the Poison Hall!

The standing of the head of the Poison Hall was in no way

inferior to the head of the Beast Hall.

"That's right!" Seeing that the other party clearly didn't know that Gu Mu was the hall master despite being here to look for him, a wary look appeared on the faces of the poison masters. "May I know the reason why you are looking for the hall master? I'll help you relay your message!"

"The reason?"

Sun Qiang hesitated for a moment, but upon recalling his standing, he straightened his plump body and stood imposingly.

Placing his hands behind his back, his eyebrows shot up, and an arrogant look appeared on his face, "Hmph, tell him that his Uncle Sun Qiang is here, so he should hurry out to welcome me!"

Chapter 430: Gu Mu's Teacher Is Here Too

[2in1]

"Uncle Sun Qiang?"

Wei Yuqing was just about to explain the matter when he heard these words. His lips trembled, and he nearly bit his own tongue.

As the head of the Poison Hall, there were no doubts about the other party's strength and his ability to utilize poison. Even if Hall Master Xie Jiuchen were to come personally, there was no guarantee that he could defeat the other party.

Even Wei Yuqing had to bow respectfully before such an elder for fear of offending the other party.

Yet, this fellow declared that 'uncle is here' as soon as he arrived.

Where in the world did that come from?

Even if Gu Mu was Yang shi's grandstudent, you should have nothing much to do with it!

For a Dingli realm fellow to claim to be the uncle of a Zhizun realm expert...

And to declare it so loudly and imposingly at that...

Wei Yuqing felt his face turn green.

He thought that it should be a simple matter bringing Sun Qiang here to look for someone. How could he have known that Sun Qiang was such an unreliable companion?

"What did you say?"

"Where did this fool come from!"

As expected. As soon as Sun Qiang spoke those arrogant words, everyone's fury immediately erupted.

They had always admired Hall Master Gu Mu's incredible strength, so how could they tolerate a random stranger claiming to be his uncle, his senior? This was an insult!

Furthermore, even if Hall Master Gu Mu were to really have an uncle, the other party should at least be a powerful Transcendent Mortal expert. How could such a shameless-looking Dingli realm fellow like you be his uncle?

"Audacious!"

Used to such situations, Sun Qiang's eyebrows shot up as he bellowed authoritatively, "Hurry up and call him out. Otherwise, don't blame me if I get that lad Gu Mu to tear you apart!"

"Lad? Gu Mu?"

Wei Yuqing's mouth twitched yet again.

He felt that a heart problem would crop up soon enough if he continued listening to these words.

"You..."

The faces of the poison masters steeled in fury. Unable to hold back their fury, they were about to make a move on Sun Qiang when a voice echoed.

"What happened? Who are these visitors?"

Turning to the origin of the voice, an imposing young man walked over with widened strides.

It had not been long since the bell rang, and it was already ringing for the second time. When did the Poison Hall get so bothersome?

"Poison Master Wu Xi, you came at the right time. These fellows popped out from nowhere and claimed to be Hall Master Gu's uncle..." The group hurriedly explained the matter to the young man who had just appeared.

"Teacher's uncle? I don't recall teacher having any relatives..."

Wu Xi frowned in confusion.

Even though he was baffled, he chose to handle the matter prudently. Thus, he clasped his fist and asked.

"I am Wu Xi, and Hall Master Gu Mu is my teacher. May I know how to address you and where did you come from so that I can report this matter to teacher."

Seeing the other party's respectful attitude, Sun Qiang nodded his head in satisfaction. "How to address me? I am your teacher's uncle, so you can address me as grandfather!"

Wu Xi's eyebrows twitched, and his body swayed for an instant.

As the direct disciple of the hall master, he possessed a high standing in the Poison Hall. For a Dingli realm fellow out of nowhere to claim to be his grandfather...

Stifled, he nearly exploded.

Even so, if the other party was truly his teacher's uncle, there would be no problem with the address.

"Since you claim to be teacher's uncle, may I know if you have... anything to affirm your identity?"

Suppressing his rage, Wu Xi clasped his fists respectfully.

"Here!"

With a flick of his wrist, Sun Qiang threw the token Zhang Xuan gave him over.

"It's teacher's token..."

Upon seeing the object, Wu Xi's face changed.

He had seen teacher's token once, and it was a one-of-a-kind object. To think that he would see it on this plump man... Could this unimpressive fellow truly be teacher's uncle?

"Elder, please wait for a moment. I'll report this matter to teacher now!"

Given that the other party was able to take out his teacher's token, it was highly likely that his words were true. Thus, Wu Xi hurriedly clasped his fists respectfully. At the same time, he also changed his method of address to 'elder'.

"Un, go on!"

Sun Qiang waved his hands proudly.

Seeing the imposing Wu Xi behaving so respectfully, the other poison masters were dumbfounded.

They thought that this fellow was bragging. To think that it was actually true!

Just a moment ago, someone had just appeared claiming to be the hall master's teacher. Given his powerful and majestic disposition, no one doubted his words at all.

And now, the uncle had appeared as well. However, why did this uncle seem so weak and unimpressive?

...

In the lounge of the Poison Hall, Gu Mu was seated on a chair, and he had an extremely respectful and humble look on his face.

In the past twenty days, his cultivation had leaped considerably. Vaguely, one could sense that he was just a single step away from reaching Half-Transcension.

It seemed like it wouldn't be long before he managed to make that breakthrough to a whole new world.

Seated before was a white-haired elder. His eyes were deep as though an abyss, filled with the vicissitudes of life, leaving one

with an unfathomable impression of him.

Seated beside the elder was a youth dressed in a white robe. The youth had rosy lips and held a foldable fan in his hands. Taking a closer look, he was even more dashing than the refined Ji Mo gongzi, who won the hearts of the ladies in Tianwu Royal City.

In fact, the disposition and appearance of this youth far exceeded that of Ji Mo. The difference was as huge as though the gap between the heaven and the earth.

A feature that stood out for that youth was his smooth and pale skin. Even Zhang Xuan, who had already cultivated the Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan, could not match up to his complexion. Perhaps, only Zhao Ya could be a match for him.

The youth sat quietly on a chair beside the elder. Even though he didn't speak a single word, he exuded a pressure that caused the white-haired elder to feel slightly restrained, not daring to speak excessively.

"Teacher, this is the Crimson Flame Lotus Seed. Upon consumption, it'll increase a person's chances of breaking into the Half-Transcension realm by twenty percent!"

With a flick on his wrist, Hall Master Gu Mu took out a jade box and passed it over to the elder.

Opening the box, a blood-red object the size of a peanut appeared

before everyone's gazes. It exuded astonishingly concentrated spiritual energy which revitalized one with just a single breath.

Crimson Flame Lotus Seed!

This was the treasure obtained back when he was at the Red Lotus Range.

"Un!"

Nodding his head, the elder took it and passed it to the youth beside him, "Gong-gongzi!"

"This is the reason why you came here?"

The youth who was addressed as 'gongzi' glanced at the seed for a moment before closing it.

The incomparably valuable Crimson Flame Lotus Seed that other cultivators would kill to obtain seemed to be something of zero value in his eyes.

"I heard that this object is beneficial to gongzi's recovery..." the elder hurriedly explained.

"You've been troubled!"

Upon hearing that it was for him, 'gongzi' nodded his head, kept the jade box, and fell silent once more.

"Well done!"

Seeing the finicky 'gongzi' accept the Crimson Flame Lotus Seed, the elder heaved a sigh of relief. Only then did he turn to Hall Master Gu Mu and nod his head in satisfaction.

"Teacher has done so much for me, it's only right for me to be filial to you!"

Gu Mu hurriedly clasped his fist humbly.

The person seated before him was his ex-teacher, 4-star Poison Master Jin Conghai.

When Jin Conghai was still a 3-star poison master, he accepted Gu Mu in as his student and groomed him. Eventually, he managed to break through his bottleneck, so he left Xuanyuan Kingdom. With this departure, he was gone for two whole decades.

Even so, his guidance had played a fundamental role to Gu Mu's current accomplishments.

Otherwise, he would probably still be trying to crawl ahead as a 2-star poison master.

Knowing that the Crimson Flame Lotus Seed was an incredible treasure, he immediately sent the news over to his teacher. As such, his teacher made a detour to the Xuanyuan Kingdom Poison Hall.

"Since we've obtained what we needed, let's go!"

The 'gongzi' didn't seem to care for pleasantries or that sort. Waving the fan in his hand, he stood up.

"Yes!" Jin Conghai nodded.

"Teacher, may I know... where are you heading in such a hurry to? If it's within my means, I wish to offer my assistance..."

Hall Master Gu Mu hesitated for a brief moment before asking.

He thought that his teacher would stay a period of time, during which, he could seek his guidance on his cultivation to break through his bottleneck. Yet, the other party was going to leave right after arriving. This left him slightly disappointed.

"Gongzi is intending to head to a Tier 1 Kingdom below Xuanyuan Kingdom. There's nothing we need your help on, you don't have to worry about it!"

Jin Conghai shook his hands and rejected the other party's offer with a smile.

"There is a total of twenty-seven Tier-1 Kingdoms under Xuanyuan Kingdom. May I know which one is gongzi and teacher intending to head to? I am familiar with some of them, so perhaps I can help lead the way."

Knowing that his teacher was deferential to this 'gongzi', Hall Master Gu Mu asked for the latter's opinion as well.

"Tianwu Kingdom!" Jin Conghai said.

"Tianwu? I've just returned from there a few days ago. In fact, this Crimson Flame Lotus Seed came from the branch there! I am well-versed with the directions there, so if I may, I could guide you both!"

Gu Mu's eyes lit up in excitement.

Given that he had just come from Tianwu Kingdom, he was still rather familiar with the basic layout of the region.

"You've just returned from Tianwu Kingdom?"

Hearing the Gu Mu's words, the nonchalant 'gongzi' suddenly turned around and asked, "Good, I've something to ask you about."

"Gongzi, feel free to speak!" Gu Mu replied respectfully.

After a momentary pause, the 'gongzi' was just about to voice his query when anxious footsteps sounded outside. Then, Wu Xi appeared in the group's sight. "Teacher!"

"What's wrong?"

Given that the other party interrupted the esteemed 'gongzi's' words, Gu Mu's complexion immediately darkened.

"There's a person outside claiming to be your uncle, and he insists on meeting you..." Wu Xi hurriedly said.

"My uncle?"

Gu Mu was baffled. "When did I ever have an uncle?"

His father was the sole son in his family, so how could he have an uncle?

"But... he has your token!"

Wu Xi quickly lifted the token Sun Qiang gave him up.

Upon seeing the token, realization suddenly struck Gu Mu. "Could he be someone senior granduncle sent?"

It was just a few days ago that he gave this token to the

mysterious 'senior granduncle'.

Even though the other party looked young, he possessed unfathomable means. The reason why he managed to touch on the gates of Half-Transcension in just a short span of twenty days was because of this senior's guidance.

The other party had cured him of his affliction and helped him tame the Lava Beast, thus granting him sufficient time and hope to avenge his wife.

To be honest, the gratitude he felt toward this mysterious senior didn't pale to that of his teacher.

"What senior granduncle?"

Hearing Gu Mu's mutterings, Jin Conghai turned his head over.

"I was just about to report this matter to teacher..."

Gu Mu hurriedly walked forward and asked, "May I know if... teacher has a young-looking senior uncle?"

Since the other party was his senior granduncle, then naturally, he would be his teacher's senior uncle.

"Senior uncle?"

Jin Conghai was bewildered. "Young-looking? What's his name?"

"His name is Bai Chan... However, I think that it's just an alias. I'm not too sure what his real name is either!" Gu Mu said.

Gu Mu had Liao Xun investigated the matter, but the results showed that Bai Chan was only an ordinary physician in Tianwu Royal City. Most probably, senior granduncle did not want others to know his identity, that's why he chose to conceal his true name.

Seeing that Gu Mu was unclear of the matter as well, Jin Conghai asked, "Where's he now?"

It was common for a cultivator to have many teachers throughout his entire life. However, most of them could only be considered as a half-teacher. More often than not, one would only have a single true teacher.

His teacher had already passed away many years ago, and he didn't hear of his teacher having any juniors at all. Where did this senior uncle appear from?

"I haven't met him since parting from him at Red Lotus Range. However, I gave him my token, and someone is looking for me now with it. Most probably, that person should be his junior or his student!" Gu Mu said.

Since the other party claimed to be his uncle, it meant that the other party was a junior of his senior granduncle.

"My teacher, Jin Chengxue, has already passed away, thirteen years ago. He'd never spoken of our lineage, so I'm not too sure about the details as well. However, if he's truly related to my teacher, I should be able to recognize it..."

With a deep frown, Jin Conghai suddenly felt intrigued to know who this 'senior uncle' was. After a moment of hesitation, he turned to look at 'gongzi'.

"It's only out of interest that I'm heading to Tianwu Royal City. It isn't much of a problem for me to push back my schedule for a few days. Since this is a problem regarding your lineage, you should investigate it properly to prevent anyone from making use of your name!"

Knowing Jin Conghai's intentions, 'gongzi' shook his hands casually.

"Thank you, gongzi!"

Upon receiving the other party's approval, Jin Conghai's eyes lit up. Then, turning to Gu Mu, he issued an instruction.

"Allow him in. I would like to see if this senior uncle is real or not..."

"Yes!"

Gu Mu nodded before gesturing to Wu Xi.

The young man walked out, and before long, he returned with two figures behind him.

The one walking in front was a plump man whose cultivation was only at Dingli realm. His hands behind his back, his chest was puffed up, and he carried a slight air of superiority.

Sun Qiang.

The other man was an elder possessing a cultivation of Zhizun realm pinnacle. He had a composed disposition, but there was a sharp glint in his eyes.

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing.

As soon as the trio walked in, before Wu Xi had a chance to introduce them, Sun Qiang's eyes swept across the people in the room and he said, "Which of you is Gu Mu?"

Seeing how that fellow arrogantly addressed the hall master by his name, the complexion of Wu Xi and the others turned awful.

"I am!"

Gu Mu frowned as well, but he clasped his fist and responded politely.

"I believe you have seen the token already. The old master hopes for you to make a trip to Xuanyuan Royal City."

Without the slightest hesitation, Sun Qiang walked up to the main seat and waved his plump hands, "You should hurry up and make preparations!"

"May I know... the reason why senior granduncle is asking me to head for Xuanyuan Royal City? And what should I prepare?" Gu Mu asked in confusion.

Since the other party had the token, it was unlikely that this plump man was an imposter. Besides, Gu Mu had given his word that regardless of who it was, as long as they came to him with the token in hand, he would fulfill their demands regardless of what it was.

Sun Qiang replied, "As a subordinate, I dare not comment on the old master's affairs. I advise you to do the same as well... When you reach Xuanyuan Royal City, he'll inform you on the rest!"

"This... Yes!" Gu Mu nodded.

Not only was this Dingli realm fellow fearless before the Zhizun realm pinnacle Poison Hall Hall Master, he even spoke with a lecturing tone. Grand Elder Wei Yuqing felt so faint-headed that the whites of his eyes were showing.

He thought that given Sun Qiang's weak cultivation and shabby background, it was unlikely for him to be experienced in this kind of huge matter. Thus, as a Zhizun realm pinnacle, the grand elder of the Beast Hall, he intended to bring him along and teach him a thing or two...

In the end... he became the countryside bumpkin instead.

Before the fearsome head of the Poison Hall, he was so scared that he didn't dare to utter a single word. On the other hand, the other party was able to speak nonchalantly, lecturing as he pleased, not giving the slightest consideration to the hall master's face at all...

He sure was bold!

Where in the world did he get such confidence from?

Did he really think that the other party wouldn't dare kill him?

Even the composed 'gongzi' couldn't help but widen his eyes in astonishment.

He had seen arrogant people before, but this plump man clearly topped them all.

Given the other party's strength, even an apprentice in the Poison Hall could easily extinguish his measly life. Yet, he was able to speak fearlessly here. Could his backing truly be that great? Was

he certain that Gu Mu wouldn't make a move on him, that's why he was able to remain fearless?

"This friend here, may I know how I can address your old master?"

Unable to hold himself back anymore, Jin Conghai spoke up.

The other party's confidence and boldness had left him puzzled as well.

If the other party was an imposter, he would surely show some hints of fear. However, Jin Conghai could sense that this plump man was truly confident and fearless.

This meant that he must have something to fall back on...

Such boldness was not something an imposter could possess.

"Audacious! Who do you think you are? I'm speaking to Hall Master Gu Mu, this isn't your place to butt in!"

Sun Qiang's eyebrows shot up furiously.

"The heck!"

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing nearly spurted a mouthful of blood. He

nearly couldn't hold back his urge to escape.

Due to Sun Qiang's lack of strength, he was unable to gauge the strength of this elder. However, as soon as Wei Yuqing walked in, he had already noticed the peculiarity with this elder. Given the deeply concealed and exceptionally calm aura of the other party, there was a high chance that he was a Transcendent Mortal expert!

It was precisely due to this elder that he didn't dare to move or speak at all. Yet, this fellow... berated him!

Doomed!

Wei Yuqing thought that this should be an easy mission since they only had to look for a person. But from the looks of it now, this simple mission was going to claim his life...

He wasn't the only one astounded by this situation. 'Gongzi' and Gu Mu also nearly bit their tongues.

How dare a Fighter 5-dan Dingli realm weakling speak to a Transcendent Mortal expert like that...

This was no longer boldness, this was madness!

"You..."

Having been bellowed at, Jin Conghai's face darkened. He flung

his sleeves and said, "I am Hall Master Gu Mu's teacher, 4-star Poison Master Jin Conghai. Even so, I still have no rights to speak?"

"Gu Mu's teacher? 4-star poison master?"

Sun Qiang was taken aback.

He thought that the other party was just a sidekick, and he didn't expect him to be such a formidable figure.

Even so, Sun Qiang didn't panic in the least. He simply stared at Jin Conghai with a look of disdain.

"So what if you're a 4-star poison master? Even 4-star master teachers like Su Fan and Ling Yuheng have to pay respect to the old master in the capacity of a student, not daring to refute even when reprimanded... Why, do you think that you're superior to 4-star master teachers?"

Trying to scare me?

Let me tell you, I, Brother Qiang, am no bumpkin!

Back then, even the 4-star master teacher 'Little Su' acted subserviently to the old master, not daring to speak loudly or go against his wills. You are just a mere poison master. No matter how incredible you are, do you think you can match up to the number one occupation in the world?

Didn't I try to spare your pride already? What are you bragging for!

"Su Fan? Ling Yuheng? Do you mean Elder Su and Elder Ling from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance's Master Teacher Pavilion?"

Jin Conghai was about to erupt from rage when he heard those words. His face immediately warped in shock.

As 4-star master teachers, Su Fan and Ling Yuheng were famous figures in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. Not only were they powerful, they also possessed incredible influence as the elders of the Master Teacher Pavilion. Their standing was comparable even to the nobles of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance's royal family.

Yet, these two noble and powerful master teachers actually paid respect to his old master in the capacity of a student... Are you for real?

If that's true... Then who in the world was his old master?

A grave look surfaced on Jin Conghai's face.

Chapter 431: Wreaking Havoc in Xuanyuan Kingdom (1) [2in1]

"You know Little Su and Little Ling?"

Sun Qiang frowned.

"I've... met them once!"

Hearing him address 4-star master teachers in such a manner, the corner of Jin Conghai's lips twitched.

Those two were powerful figures in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, and yet, in this plump man's mouth, they seemed as though insignificant small fries...

His head spun frenziedly.

"Since you know them, then it won't be a problem to tell you then!"

Sun Qiang's expression finally alleviated slightly upon seeing the fear on the other party's face, and he revealed, "The old master, Yang Xuan, is a master teacher. As for his rank... he has never revealed it before, so I don't know either. However, Su shi has once hinted that his capability has definitely reached the level of a... 6-star master teacher!"

"A 6-star... master teacher?"

'Gongzi', Jin Conghai, Gu Mu, and the others leaped in shock.

Even the most formidable master teacher in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, the head of the Master Teacher Pavilion, Pavilion Master Kang, was only at 4-star pinnacle. He was still a far way off from reaching 5-star, needless to say, 6-star.

In the ranking system of a master teacher, the higher the rank, the greater the difference between each ranking.

Even though there was only a difference of two ranks between 6-star and 4-star pinnacle, there was actually a huge disparity in their cultivation. Even if all of the experts of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance were to band together, they wouldn't be able to match up to an expert of this class.

To think that the old master the other party was speaking about was such a formidable existence...

It was no wonder why this plump man, despite being only at Dingli realm, could act so fearlessly before them.

With such a huge backing, putting aside Zhizun realm pinnacle cultivators and Transcendent Mortal experts... Even the powerful Fleeting Cloud Sect wouldn't dare offend him!

On the other hand, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing's body shuddered,

and he nearly fainted from shock.

He had never seen the old master that Sun Qiang was speaking of, but he had seen the young master... it was the incomparably talented Beast Tamer Zhang!

To that genius, taming a beast was as though a walk in the park, and even the incredibly difficult Ten Beasts Cage was no more than a slight workout for him!

All along, he had thought that Beast Tamer Zhang might be the direct disciple of some high-ranked beast tamer. He never could have imagined that Beast Tamer Zhang's teacher would be a 6-star master teacher!

It was no wonder why he was so formidable despite his young age.

'I must hurry back to inform the hall master of the matter!' Grand Elder Wei Yuqing thought.

"That's right! However, the one who wishes to meet Hall Master Gu this time is Young Master Zhang Xuan. Make some preparations and bring more poison along. At the very least, you won't panic when the time comes!"

Seeing the fear in everyone's eyes, Sun Qiang nodded his head in satisfaction.

Who was Yang shi?

As the butler of a master teacher whose ranking potentially exceeded 6-star, even if he didn't possess sufficient strength, he mustn't lose out in his disposition. If he were to be frightened by these small fries, how could he still proudly claim to be the old master's butler?

"Yes!"

Upon learning that 'senior granduncle' was a 6-star master teacher, bits and pieces of Gu Mu's interaction with the other party gradually surfaced in his mind.

Solving his affliction, helping him tame the Lava Beast, expelling the Contract Gu from the Great Herb King's body...

All of his feats were anything but ordinary.

At that moment, he realized that... this fellow might not necessarily be bragging.

That senior granduncle 'Yang shi' might truly be a person of such great means.

"Gongzi, is what he said true?"

Jin Conghai communicated telepathically with 'gongzi'.

Gongzi might be young and his cultivation could not compare up to him, but he was extraordinarily sharp when it came to discerning people.

"His tone is confident, and there isn't the slightest hint of a lie in his words. That Yang shi probably isn't an ordinary figure!" Gongzi replied calmly.

"This..."

"Actually, it's not difficult to determine whether his words are true or not. Based on his words, his young master is probably at Xuanyuan Royal City. If I recall correctly, we have to pass by there to reach Tianwu Royal City so we can go over to take a look. If the old master he speaks of is truly a 6-star master teacher, then befriending him would surely be beneficial."

Gongzi continued, "If that's not the case, you can handle the matter as you please!"

"Yes!" Jin Conghai hurriedly nodded.

That plump man had spoken so confidently that even he was unable to gauge whether the other party's words were true or not.

If this plump man was truly the subordinate of a 6-star master teacher, offending him could potentially be calamitous. Getting on bad terms with an expert of that caliber spelled certain doom.

In any case, since they were heading for Xuanyuan Royal City anyway, they could take a look. Through assessing the young master the other party spoke of, they might be able to determine the authenticity of the other party's words.

Upon coming to a decision, the duo decided to speak no more.

As all of Gu Mu's possessions were kept in his storage ring, there was nothing for him to prepare. Soon, he was ready to set off.

Thus, leaving the Poison Hall, the group headed in the direction of Xuanyuan Royal City.

...

Hu!

In the chamber, Zhang Xuan finally opened his eyes.

"Such a pity..."

Lamentation surfaced on Zhang Xuan's face.

Ever since Sun Qiang left, Zhang Xuan had been immersing himself into his cultivation. Today was already the third day since then.

On the first day, his physical strength reached 30,000 ding.

In the next two days, he expended a total of five droplets of spirit beast blood essence, but his strength had only reached 35,000 ding before reaching a bottleneck.

"There's nothing wrong with my cultivation method, it's the spirit beast blood essence that has become ineffective!"

Exhaling deeply, Zhang Xuan shook his head.

The Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan was a formula to enhance one's physical body through absorbing spirit beast blood essence. As a cultivation technique compiled by the Library of Heaven's Path, it was impossible for there to be any problems with it. At the same time, Zhang Xuan could sense that he hadn't reached the cap of his cultivation yet.

The problem was that... the spirit beast blood essence had lost its effectiveness.

All Zhang Xuan could find in Xuanyuan Kingdom's Beast Hall was the blood essence of grade-1 spirit beasts. An item of that rank was useful and powerful when one's cultivation was still weak. However, after reaching the strength comparable to a Zhizun realm advanced stage, the effects of the blood essence had become minimal.

Using an analogy, when there is a huge difference in the height of two connected ponds, there would be a rapid flow of water from the higher pond to the lower pond. But when their heights finally become equal, the flow of water to the lower pond would stop.

This grade-1 spirit beast blood essence was only sufficient for Zhang Xuan to reach Zhizun realm advanced stage. At this level, the height between both ponds would be already equal. No matter how much more grade-1 spirit beast blood essence Zhang Xuan absorbed, it would be difficult for his strength to progress.

Immersing his consciousness into the state of his body, Zhang Xuan saw that the blood droplets flowing through his body were round and satiated. They were dense as though mercury, and every single droplet had immense strength packed within it. They were in no way inferior to the grade-1 spirit beast blood essence that Zhang Xuan consumed before.

Even though Zhang Xuan's cultivation had not progress by much in the past two days of cultivation, his efforts were not completely futile. He managed to reinforce his cultivation and adapt to his newfound strength. At the very least, he wouldn't lose control of his strength as he did back then in Master Lu Chen's house.

"I still have seven droplets left. I'll give three of them to Yuan Tao and find a way to further awaken his Emperor's Bloodline. As for the last four, I'll give them to the Howling Firmament Beast!"

Since there was no point in keeping the spirit beast blood essence droplets, he might as well just give them away.

Yuan Tao possessed the Emperor's Bloodline, and the spirit beast blood essence was a treasure that could be used to awaken one's unique constitution.

As for the Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast, since Zhang Xuan had yet to make a breakthrough in his zhenqi cultivation, he was still unable to trigger a Bloodline Evolution in it. However, through channeling the energy contained within the spirit beast blood essence properly, raising its cultivation by one or two small realms could still be easily done.

With the knowledge from the books contained within Xuanluo Mountain Range and Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall, coupled with the Eye of Insight, even without utilizing the Library of Heaven's Path, Zhang Xuan was still capable of such a feat.

In fact, putting aside Zhang Xuan's unique abilities as a master teacher, just in terms of the capabilities of a beast tamer, he was superior to typical 3-star beast tamers.

Having made up his mind, Zhang Xuan immediately got to action. Summoning Yuan Tao and the Howling Firmament Beast over, he distributed the remaining seven droplets of spirit beast blood essence and explained the method to using them clearly.

After dealing with that matter, he saw Hall Master Xie Jiuchen walking over with a delighted expression.

"Beast Tamer Zhang, I've managed to gather all of the books that

you require!"

In exchange for taming the Nightmare Beast, Zhang Xuan demanded compensation in the form of cultivation technique manuals. After three days of hard work, the Beast Hall finally managed to gather a thousand manuals of Half-Zhizun and Zhizun realm cultivation techniques each.

Huala!

As Hall Master Xie Jiuchen spoke, he flicked his wrist and two huge bookshelves appeared before Zhang Xuan. An entire collection consisting of two thousand books were placed in them.

Fearing that Zhang Xuan would be unsatisfied, the Beast Hall had used all of its connections and paid a heavy price to gather all of these books from the distinguished clans. As such, most of the cultivation techniques within the pile were actually rather decent.

Even though they were only copies, just the ability to gather so many valuable manuals in a short span of three days bore testimony to the immense influence the Beast Hall wielded.

"You have my gratitude, Hall Master Xie!"

After a brief glance, Zhang Xuan could instantly tell that the Beast Hall must have paid a heavy price for it. Grateful for the favor, Zhang Xuan asked, "How is the taming of the Nightmare Beast coming along?"

"That fellow's injuries are starting to recover, and it's no longer as resistant to us as it was... It's all thanks to Beast Tamer Zhang's help!"

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen nodded with a bright smile on his face.

Even though the Nightmare Beast was reluctant to submit to the Beast Hall, it had already signed a contract to Zhang Xuan, and Zhang Xuan's words were law to it. Resigning to fate, its attitude toward the Beast Hall improved significantly.

As time passed, even if the Beast Hall was unable to tame it completely, as long as they were able to build a good relationship with it, it shouldn't be a problem for them to rely on its help during times of crisis.

"That's good!"

Seeing that everything was going well, Zhang Xuan nodded in satisfaction.

"Beast Tamer Zhang, you should continue on with whatever you're busy with. I'll take my leave now!"

Given that Zhang Xuan had requested for these cultivation techniques, it was likely he was planning to cultivate or research them. Thus, deciding not to be a nuisance, Hall Master Xie Jiuchen left.

As soon as the other party was gone, Zhang Xuan immediately slid his fingers through the secret manuals to duplicate them in the Library of Heaven's Path.

"Compile!"

With a hushed exclamation, two secret manuals appeared in Zhang Xuan's mind.

They were the Half-Zhizun and Zhizun realm Heaven's Path Divine Art manuals.

Chuckling softly, Zhang Xuan began browsing through them.

It didn't take him long to complete the two books.

"Time to try cultivating it!"

Choosing not to waste his time, Zhang Xuan sat down cross-legged, and with a flick of his wrist, a spirit stone appeared in his palms and he started cultivating.

He had obtained ten spirit stones from the Lin Ruotian's storage ring, and five from winning the championship of the Beast Taming Competition.

In other words, there was a total of fifteen spirit stones in Zhang

Xuan's hands at the moment. Back when Liang Qingming and Lin Long were smashed to meat paste by the Book of Heaven's Path, Zhang Xuan was unable to find their storage rings.

Even though there weren't many of them, he calculated that it should be sufficient to raise his cultivation considerably.

Kacha! Kacha!

The spirit stones that were sapped dry were reduced to powder. At the same time, an immense amount of spiritual energy surged into Zhang Xuan's meridians, causing his cultivation to steadily grow stronger.

Boom!

Around ten minutes or so later, his body jolted and his cultivation broke through Zongshi realm pinnacle to reach Half-Zhizun.

Jiang Shu, Mo Tianxue, and the others had cultivated their entire lives, only to be kept out of this level. If they were to know that this fellow had only spent a dozen minutes to accomplish his feat, they would probably die from excessive vomiting of blood.

Half-Zhizun meant that that one already had half a foot into Zhizun realm, and one's level of existence was already undergoing a metamorphosis.

Even so, Zhang Xuan didn't stop there. He continued absorbing spiritual energy from the spirit stones greedily.

Kacha!

An hour later, Zhang Xuan's body jolted, and he had successfully reached Zhizun realm.

Cultivating from Zongshi realm pinnacle to Zhizun realm didn't even take him an hour.

As expected of the Heaven's Path Divine Art. With sufficient spiritual energy, cultivating was no different from eating or drinking. The concept of bottlenecks didn't exist in Zhang Xuan's training.

Having achieved a breakthrough in his cultivation, Zhang Xuan immersed himself in the sensation of having an immense amount of zhenqi flowing through his body.

At this moment, just his zhenqi strength itself amounted up to 10,000 ding. He had truly stepped into the top ranks of the Fighter realm.

Two hours later.

Coming to a stop in his cultivation, Zhang Xuan sighed.

Along with the rise in his cultivation, the demand for the quality and quantity of spirit stones was rising exponentially.

In the past, five spirit stones were more than sufficient for him to reach Zongshi realm pinnacle. However, at this moment, fifteen spirit stones were only barely enough for him to reach Zhizun realm. It wasn't even sufficient for him to reinforce his cultivation as a Zhizun realm primary stage cultivator.

The main reason why Zhang Xuan's spirit stone expenditure was so exaggerated was due to the absurd purity of his Heaven's Path zhenqi, which in turn resulted in an absurdly high demand in the quality of spiritual energy that he absorbed.

If it was any other Zhizun realm expert, a single low-tier spirit stone would be sufficient to raise their cultivation significantly. However, Zhang Xuan found himself unable to absorb most of the impure spiritual energy contained within the spirit stone.

About eighty to ninety percent of it went to waste.

Even so, the gains were great. Despite still being in Zhizun realm primary stage, his zhenqi strength had risen by another 5000 ding to reach 15,000 ding. With such strength, he could easily crush any Zhizun realm primary stage expert.

"Along with my physical strength of 35,000 ding, I'll be able to defeat even Zhizun realm pinnacle expert. Coupled with the prowess of the Eye of Insight and Library of Heaven's Path, I'll be a match for even a Half-Transcension expert!"

Zhang Xuan's eyes gleamed in confidence.

Adding both his zhenqi strength and physical strength together, his overall might summed up to an astonishing 50,000 ding. This made him significantly stronger than the 40,000 ding of strength that a typical Zhizun realm pinnacle cultivator possessed.

Pairing that with his Heaven's Path battle techniques and the various abilities of a master teacher, it would be possible for him to defeat even a Half-Transcension expert.

In the fourth day upon reaching Xuanyuan Kingdom Beast Hall, as well as the seventh day that Lu Chong fell into coma, Zhang Xuan, from a Zongshi realm cultivator, finally gained the strength surpassing a Zhizun realm pinnacle expert!

In other words...

He finally possessed sufficient strength to avenge his student!

"Lu Chong, look at me... I shall avenge you!"

Zhang Xuan's eyes narrowed as he muttered hoarsely.

Since he had already achieved sufficient strength, it was time for him to make a move.

But before that, he had to gain some understanding of the overall strength of Xuanyuan Kingdom first.

Thus, walking out of the chamber, Zhang Xuan walked to another room, knocked on the door, and entered.

"How is it?"

Without wasting any words on pleasantries, Zhang Xuan immediately got straight to the point.

Before his seclusion, on top of instructing Sun Qiang to look for Gu Mu and Hall Master Xie Jiuchen to gather the secret manuals, he had also arranged for Mo Yu to head to Xuanyuan Kingdom to look into Ding Mu's affairs.

If Zhang Xuan wanted to kill the Xuanyuan Kingdom's crown prince, he mustn't allow the Beast Hall to hear of it. Otherwise, if word were to leak out and that fellow were to choose to hide in some remote corner in the world, given how large the alliance was, it would be impossible for Zhang Xuan to find him.

Thus, he decided to entrust this job to Mo Yu.

The other party probably had already looked into his affairs, and it wasn't too hard to dig up news of his students. It would be extremely easy for Zhao Ya and the others to be noticed and captured if he were to send them instead.

Besides, Mo Yu was a 1-star master teacher, and given her standing, it would be relatively easier for her to gather intelligence.

"I've gathered some news..."

A slight frown crept onto Mo Yu's forehead as she replied, "As soon as Ding Mu returned to Xuanyuan Kingdom, he immediately sought refuge in the Master Teacher Pavilion. Ever since then, he hasn't stepped out from there!"

"Master Teacher Pavilion?"

Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up.

Things always seemed to go in the worst direction.

If one wanted to go against the Conferred Kingdom, the greatest obstacle wasn't the country itself but its Master Teacher Pavilion.

The Master Teacher Pavilion had a responsibility to maintain peace and stability in its region, so it rarely allowed anyone to wreak havoc in its territory. Otherwise, given how many experts there were in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, they could easily travel to a weaker kingdom and proclaim themselves as emperors.

With such instability, the kingdom system would fall apart eventually.

While killing the crown prince might result in chaos, it wasn't as destabilizing as killing an emperor. Given Zhang Xuan's standing as a master teacher, the other party would probably just overlook the matter. However, from the looks of it, he seemed to have been underestimating the severity of the matter.

"It's said that the head of the Master Teacher Pavilion, Luo Qianhong, is indebted to the royal family, and he's a close friend of Ding Mu as well. As such, he intends to stand up to mediate the conflict!" Mo Yu revealed the news that she had just heard.

The other party had intentionally put word out, so it wasn't difficult for Mo Yu to hear of it.

"Hmph!"

Zhang Xuan's eyes narrowed and dense killing intent poured out of him, "As long as he hands over Ding Mu, I'll allow him to mediate whatever he likes!"

Mediate?

If he were to accept it, then what about Lu Chong?

You must be dreaming!

"Zhang Xuan, there's another matter..."

Seeing the other party's expression, Mo Yu knew that he was determined to kill Ding Mu. A hint of worry flashed across her eyes.

"Hmm?" Zhang Xuan turned around to look at Mo Yu.

"The Xuanyuan Kingdom's emperor, Ding Chong, has announced that he will pass down the throne to Ding Mu!" Mo Yu said.

"Pass down the throne?" Zhang Xuan's forehead furrowed.

If Ding Mu remained as a crown prince, even though killing him might bring some trouble, it wasn't beyond his means to resolve it.

However, once he inherits the throne and becomes the emperor, killing him would rattle the foundation of the kingdom. The other Conferred Kingdoms might strike at this good opportunity.

If so, there would be war, and the population would suffer. Given such, the Master Teacher Pavilion would surely step in to stop Zhang Xuan.

"Seems like he's well-prepared!"

As long as Ding Mu was successfully inaugurated as the new emperor, it would be difficult for Zhang Xuan to strike.

It seemed like that fellow was truly frightened by the sight of Liang Qingming being crushed by the Book of Heaven's Path.

However... So what if he became the emperor?

So what if the Master Teacher Pavilion was going to stop him?

Since the other party injured Lu Chong, he should be ready to face his wrath!

If the kingdom tries to stop him, he will eradicate the kingdom. If the Master Teacher Pavilion tries to stop him, he will eradicate the Master Teacher Pavilion!

At most, he would just have to find some way to form more golden pages. Even if he had to become everyone's enemy, he was determined to avenge his student!

Coming to a decision, Zhang Xuan asked, "When is his inauguration ceremony?"

The inauguration of an emperor was not a minor affair. The royal family, nobles, envoys from the surrounding Conferred Kingdoms... there were many people to be invited. Given the huge amount of preparatory work required, it should take some time.

It had only been seven days since that fellow's escape. Even if the announcement of him inaugurating as the emperor was made as soon as he returned, there should still be some time before the

inauguration ceremony.

"It is... today!"

Mo Yu smiled bitterly.

As the princess of a country, as well as a potential emperor candidate groomed by Mo Tianxue, she was well-aware of the various formalities required for an inauguration ceremony.

The other party should have taken two days at minimum to travel from Tianwu Kingdom back to Xuanyuan Kingdom. In other words... in just five days, the other party managed to complete all of the formalities. They sure were efficient.

Before the inauguration was held, Ding Mu would continue to hide in the Master Teacher Pavilion. And when he's finally inaugurated as the new emperor, it will become even harder to kill him...

Even Mo Yu couldn't have expected that Zhang Xuan would force the crown prince of a Conferred Kingdom up the wall.

"Today?"

Flinging his sleeves, Zhang Xuan stood up and walked out.

"What are you going to do? It can't be that... you intend to barge

into the inauguration ceremony?"

Mo Yu's face paled.

"Indeed!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

"But your current strength... Didn't you say that you'll only head over after reaching Zhizun realm pinnacle? You're being too reckless like that..." Mo Yu hurriedly persuaded.

"Zhizun realm pinnacle?"

Without turning back, Zhang Xuan's aura suddenly burst out. In an instant, it was like a flood dragon was rising to the heavens, or a tiger stepping out of the forest, leaving one feeling helpless and insignificant.

"... I've already reached it!"

Chapter 432: Wreaking Havoc in Xuanyuan Kingdom (2)

"Going over without reaching Zhizun realm pinnacle is courting death..." Mo Yu anxiously shouted. However, halfway through her words, she finally came to a realization and her lips quivered, "What did you say... You've already reached it?"

Four days ago, when this fellow went into seclusion, he was only at Zongshi realm pinnacle. Yet, he was saying that he had already reached Zhizun realm pinnacle?

That is Zhizun realm! Countless people have been stuck at its gates, unable to surpass the bottleneck their entire lives. Yet, in four short days...

Do you have to be so exaggerated?

What in the world did you eat to become so scary?

Overwhelmed with shock, Mo Yu hurriedly took a closer look. Feeling the powerful aura the other party was exuding, she trembled.

Even though she had finally reached Zongshi realm, before him, she couldn't help but feel as helpless as an ant before a wave.

"You've really reached Zhizun realm pinnacle?"

Mo Yu was stunned.

What kind of monster was this?

Just a few days ago, when the other party told her that he wanted to exact vengeance, she told him that he had to reach Zhizun realm pinnacle to stand a chance.

In truth, she had hoped that he would back down after being told the difficulty of the matter.

In this way, the other party would give up on these dangerous thoughts and focus on the Master Teacher Tournament instead. Yet... the other party simply made breakthroughs as though they were nothing.

In just a few short days, he rose from Zongshi realm pinnacle to Zhizun realm pinnacle. It was as if those so-called cultivation bottlenecks were a concept non-existent to him... Could he still be considered as a human?

If she were to say that he would at least require the strength of a Half-Transcension, would he rise to that level as well?

She had always been proud of her talent, but why did she seem no different from trash before him...

Even the incredible genius Mo Hongyi, compared to him, was... nothing at all.

It was no wonder why Zhao Ya and the others thought nothing of it when Zhang Xuan said that he was going to aim for Zhizun realm pinnacle. She'd only realized at this moment that the others weren't just fawning over Zhang Xuan; it was the absolute truth, and perhaps... they might even be underestimating him.

"Wait a moment, I'll go along with you..."

Multiple emotions flashed across Mo Yu's face, and by the time she regained her composure, that fellow was already far away. She hurriedly rushed over to catch up.

"You're still far too weak. It'll be better for you to stay here with Zhao Ya and the others!"

Zhang Xuan stopped and waved her away.

Even though Mo Yu had improved swiftly during this period of time, breaking through the Zongshi realm barrier, her strength was still far from enough to match up to those experts in Xuanyuan Kingdom.

Bloodshed couldn't be avoided in this confrontation. Zhang Xuan was confident in holding his ground, but it would be difficult for him to protect the others on top of that.

"I am a master teacher of the Master Teacher Pavilion. On top of that, I am a princess of Tianwu Kingdom as well. As long as I don't make a move, they won't do anything to me!" Mo Yu hurriedly said.

As she spent more time with the young man before her, she gradually found it harder and harder to part with him. For some reason, knowing that he was headed for danger, she wanted to follow him as well so that she could lend her assistance if something were to really happen.

"Alright then. Later on, just remain on the back of the Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast. If there's any sign of danger, leave straight away!"

Seeing the worry on the other party's face, Zhang Xuan hesitated for a moment before eventually nodding his head.

He felt that it was his responsibility to exact vengeance for Lu Chong given that he was his teacher, but this had nothing to do with Mo Yu at all. He didn't want his own affairs to result in any harm to the other party.

"Alright!"

Knowing that this was the other party's bottom line, Mo Yu agreed in gratitude.

Reaching the courtyard, they climbed onto the Steelfang Howling

Firmament Beast, and with a roar, the latter soared into the skies.

After consuming the spirit beast blood essence and driving the spiritual energy using the method Zhang Xuan gave him, this fellow made a breakthrough once more, reaching Zhizun realm intermediate stage.

At its current strength, it was on par with Ding Mu's Gold-scaled Lightning Beast.

Given the short proximity between Beast Hall and the capital, it didn't take long for them to arrive at their destination.

"Today is Crown Prince Ding Mu's inauguration ceremony! With such a genius becoming our emperor, it seems like we can finally hold our head high before other Conferred Kingdoms!"

"Indeed! Despite only being thirty-two this year, he is already a 3-star formation master and a Zhizun realm advanced stage expert!"

"Throughout the entire history of Xuanyuan Kingdom, there have only been a handful of people who managed to reach Zhizun realm before thirty. Given his talents, he will surely be able to reach Zhizun realm pinnacle in less than ten years. With sufficient luck, he might even be able to reach Half-Transcension in his lifetime."

"Crown Prince Ding Mu has always been my idol, as well as my goal! I heard that today's inauguration ceremony will be held at the

Heaven's Altar. I must go over to have a look!"

"Wait for me, I want to go as well..."

Walking along the wide streets of Xuanyuan Royal City, such discussions could be heard all around.

Before Crown Prince Ding Mu's inauguration had even started, everyone was already thrilled.

"He sure knows how to make his move!"

Zhang Xuan's complexion darkened further.

Perhaps, the other party couldn't stand the idea of a threat looming in the shadows. Thus, he decided to make a huge fuss of this celebration to bait him out.

Without a doubt, an impeccable trap must have already been set up at the Heaven's Altar, just waiting for him to walk into it. If Zhang Xuan were to really make a move, the other party would surely mobilize the entire army of the kingdom to crush him.

However...

So what if he had set up an impeccable trap?

Since the other party dared to lay his hands on his student, then he should be prepared for the most brutal vengeance.

With a grim expression, Zhang Xuan stepped onto the back of the Howling Firmament Beast and flew toward the Heaven's Altar.

...

Xuanyuan Kingdom, Green Leaf Pavilion.

This was the information hub of Xuanyuan Kingdom. There were countless information dealers and clients walking in and out of here daily; it was even more bustling than some of the massive markets in the city.

In here, one could buy all kinds of information, as well as sell exclusive news.

The Green Leaf Pavilion would compile all of this news based on their value and create a ranking on them.

The rumors that 'The scrolls of the Green Leaves resound across the capital' didn't come from thin air.

In the past, Hall Master Feng had mentioned the ranking of items that savage beasts were fond of. Even though it was an unofficial ranking made by beast tamers, it had the shadows of the Green Leaf Pavilion in it.

If not for this massive information network pulling its connections, such private news wouldn't have spread so far.

Not only so, it had also created a ranking of the experts in the kingdom in the form of the Green Leaf Board and Young Leaf Board.

Only the most powerful experts in the kingdom were on the Green Leaf Board.

Even the head of the Master Teacher Pavilion, Half-Transcension Pavilion Master Luo Qianhong, was only in third place on the Green Leaf Board.

As for the Young Leaf Board, recorded on it were the most powerful young geniuses.

And of the Young Leaf Board, Crown Prince Ding Mu was listed on the very top.

"Pavilion Head, why is the Crown Prince listed on the top of the board? His strength is only at Zhizun realm advanced stage while the second placed Ling Luoye was clearly already at Zhizun realm pinnacle!"

In one of the executive rooms in the Green Leaf Pavilion, two figures were seated face-to-face.

The one speaking was a gray-robed elder. He was staring at the ranking board on the table in incomprehension.

Elder Liao Qingxun.

Opposite to him was a white-robed elder. He had eyebrows that were slightly arched upward, snowy hair, and eyes that were sharp as though lightning. With a single look, one could tell that he was an extraordinarily intelligent person.

Pavilion Head Dai Feng.

"The Young Leaf Board ranks the young geniuses based on their strength. Even though Ling Luoye's cultivation was above that of the crown prince, if a battle were to break out between the two of them, it was more likely that the crown prince would emerge victorious!"

Pavilion Head Dai Feng chuckled.

"Oh?" Elder Liao Qingxun was clearly doubtful of the latter's words.

"You don't believe me? I'll explain it to you then!"

Seeing the doubt in the other party's eyes, Pavilion Head Dai Feng calmly picked up the teacup on the table, scraped the floating tea leaves on top and said, "Ling Luoye's indeed talented to have reached Zhizun realm pinnacle at thirty-four. However... if a

person's cultivation rises too quickly, all kinds of problems will occur. Firstly, his cultivation technique, [Profound Ripple Art], is a water element cultivation technique. As such, it lacks offensive power. On top of that, his strongest battle technique, [Frigid Water Dance] was also relatively lacking in power. As such, he could only be considered as average among those of the same cultivation realm.

"On the other hand, Crown Prince Ding Mu...

"Firstly, I believe you should have heard of the royal family hunting down a wounded spirit beast! Back then, they procured quite a substantial amount of spirit beast blood essence. The royal family possesses an extremely powerful physical body cultivation technique known as [Spirit Blood Body Nourishment Formula]. Anybody that was tempered by it would become incredibly resilient and powerful!

"Other than that, the cultivation technique he cultivates, [Might of the Celestial Bear], grants him extraordinary strength. On top of that, he also learned the [Heaven Shattering Fist] which was known for its aggressiveness. Putting aside how none of those in the same cultivation realm would be able to match him, it wouldn't be hard to face those of higher cultivation realm than him as well.

"But of course, most importantly of all, as a 3-star formation master, he had at least seven to eight grade-3 formation plates on him. If he were to throw all of them out, it would be difficult for even a Transcendent Mortal expert to kill him, needless to say, a Zhizun realm pinnacle cultivator!

"Thus, without doubt, he was worthy of being in first place!"

At which, Pavilion Head Dai Feng turned to look at the other elder with a wide grin, "How is it? Do you still think that Ling Luoye can defeat him?"

After a moment of contemplation, Elder Liao Qingxun shook his head.

"... Impossible!"

Given the Crown Prince Ding Mu's powerful cultivation technique, extraordinary talents, and numerous aces, even despite his cultivation realm being only that of Zhizun realm advanced stage, probably not even Zhizun realm pinnacle experts would be willing to offend him.

"It's due to all of this that he was ranked at first place of the Young Leaf Board. He's deserving of his position on the Young Leaf Board. Putting aside Ling Luoye for the moment, there won't be anyone who could match him in the past five hundred years, and I believe there won't be anyone like him in the next five hundred years either!"

Pavilion Head Dai Feng chuckled.

"Indeed. Crown Prince Ding Mu is truly a talented person..."

Elder Liao Qingxun felt awed by the insight.

"It's about time for you to change your method of address. It's going to be Emperor Ding Mu from today onward!" Pavilion Head Dai Feng reprimanded with a smile.

"You're right, it's Emperor Ding Mu. No wonder everyone is thrilled about this inauguration. With such a genius leading Xuanyuan Kingdom, its national strength will only continue to grow further. Soon, among Conferred Kingdoms, no one would dare offend us!"

Recalling the sight outside, Liao Qingxun commented.

A nation being weak wasn't just a problem of its weak military; more importantly, it was related to the character and attitude of its leader.

If its leader was a talented and headstrong person, the nation would surely grow strong.

"Indeed. He'll become a much better sovereign than old Emperor Ding Chong. At the very least, his reputation should strike fear in the surrounding kingdoms, and those ambitious kingdoms would be hesitant to make their move. Seems like Xuanyuan Kingdom is about to usher in a new era of unparalleled growth!"

Pavilion Head Dai Feng was filled with anticipation for the future.

Elder Liao Qingxun nodded in agreement. Just as he was about to say something, the ground suddenly shook and a deafening sound resounded across the entire capital.

"Ding Mu, I, Zhang Xuan, am here. Get out here to face your death!"

"Face your death?"

"Someone has barged into the Heaven's Altar during the inauguration ceremony... to kill Emperor Ding Mu?"

Pavilion Head Dai Feng and Elder Liao Qingxun were dumbstruck.

Chapter 433: Bai Chen

The duo had just said that with Ding Mu's inauguration, no one would dare to wreak havoc in Xuanyuan Kingdom anymore when they heard this stark provocation. They felt a stinging sensation on their cheeks, as though someone had just struck them.

What was going on?

They hurriedly stood up and looked out of the windows.

The Green Leaf Pavilion was a tall infrastructure, and from the executive room, they could see the vast field around the Heaven's Altar.

The field was filled with a massive crowd, and in the air, a young man stood on the head of a massive Howling Firmament Beast. The young man was currently staring coldly down upon the inauguration ceremony below.

"From the looks of it... he isn't even twenty yet. However, given how deep his aura is, his cultivation has probably already reached Zhizun realm pinnacle... When did such an expert appear in the city?"

The mouths of the duo twitched.

They had just said that Crown Prince Ding Mu's feat was unsurpassed in the past five hundred years, and would remain to

be so in the next five hundred... and at the next moment, this fellow appeared. Wasn't this too coincidental?!

"Zhang Xuan... If I recall correctly, a few days ago, a beast tamer going by this name won the Beast Taming Competition. However, that person's cultivation should only be at Zongshi realm pinnacle? Why is his cultivation suddenly at Zhizun realm pinnacle?"

A beast tamer was bellowing for the inaugurating crown prince to face his death...

What was going on?

The two heads of the largest information network in Xuanyuan Kingdom stared at one another in frenzy.

...

In the house on the back of a flying massive savage beast, a few people stood by the window.

Standing at the very front was a white-robed young man. With his hands behind his back, he carried an ethereal aura.

Gu Mu stepped forward and announced, "Gongzi, Xuanyuan Royal City is right ahead of us!"

Not too far away, a massive city came into sight. It extended for

several hundred kilometers, and its thick city walls were connected to the meandering mountains. It resembled a sleeping behemoth.

"The layout of this city is indeed interesting. To think that it would be a formation!"

Opening his fan, the gongzi chuckled.

Those within might not realize anything, but from above, it was clear that the city that was connected with the mountains appeared to be aligned with some formation theories. There seemed to be a slight gathering of spiritual energy in the region.

"The Xuanyuan royal family is a clan of formation masters, and the generations of emperors had been skilled formation masters themselves. In this field, Crown Prince Ding Mu seemed to be an exceptional genius..." Gu Mu explained.

"Pui, genius my head!"

Before Gu Mu could finish his words, a disdainful voice sounded. Turning to take a look, they saw Sun Qiang with a contemptuous expression on his face.

"You disagree with my words?"

Knowing that there was a high chance that the other party was a butler of a 6-star master teacher, Gu Mu dared not get angry. Rather, he gazed at the other party with a look of bewilderment.

"This Ding Mu, having offended the young master, probably won't live for long. In terms of talent, who could match up to the young master?"

Sun Qiang's lips curled up in pride.

Sun Qiang had witnessed how Ding Mu's subordinates severely wounded Lu Chong, and he knew that the other party's actions had piqued the young master's killing intent.

While the young master was a headstrong person, he had the capability to match it. Even without the assistance of the old master, the young master's wrath wasn't something that the mere Xuanyuan Kingdom could withstand.

In Sun Qiang's eyes, there was no genius in the world who could even compare to the pinky of the young master.

Genius? Stop bringing shame to the word.

"Is this... senior uncle very talented?" Gu Mu asked.

"Of course. The young master isn't twenty yet, but he's already a 3-star painter, 2-star master teacher, 2-star beast tamer... and on top of that, he was recruited as an elder of Myriad Kingdom Alliance Physician Guild. Do you think that a fellow like Ding Mu could match up to the young master's talents?"

Sun Qiang was filled with pride.

The reticent 'gongzi' standing by the window suddenly turned around and asked, "Isn't your young master from Tianwu Kingdom? How did he become an elder of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance?"

How could a small figure from Tianwu Kingdom become an elder of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance Physician Guild?

"Who do you think the young master is? He solved all of the problems written on the Physician Guild's Wall of Dilemma in a single taking. Among those questions, there are even problems that the physicians from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance Physician Guild are unable to solve. As such, in awe of the young master's capability, they decided to recruit him as an elder..."

Sun Qiang harrumphed.

He liked speaking of the young master's accomplishments. He was just about to brag more about the various feats the young master had done when the calm gongzi's face paled and his body trembled.

"Isn't your young master... called Zhang Xuan? If I recall correctly, isn't the one who solved the questions on the Wall of Dilemma called Liu Cheng?"

"Oh, Liu Cheng is an alias that the young master used during the

2-star master teacher examination!" Sun Qiang said.

"Zhang Xuan is Liu Cheng? Your young master?"

'Gongzi' and Jin Conghai glanced at one another in shock.

"Indeed!" Sun Qiang nodded.

"Since he's a physician, why is he involved with the matters of poison masters as well? These two occupations are contradictory to one another..." A moment later, gongzi asked once more.

A master teacher could take on many occupations at once. Initially, upon hearing that Yang Xuan was a skilled poison master, as well as Gu Mu's senior granduncle, they thought that Zhang Xuan would be a skilled poison master as well... But if that was the case, how could the other party be a skilled physician too?"

"The young master is a talented individual. What is bizarre about him mastering two occupations at once?"

"The responsibility of a physician is to bring salvation to the world, and only those with benevolence in their hearts are suited for the occupation. On the other hand, the poison masters concoct poison for malicious means, and those who take on this occupation tend to be callous... Given how the two occupations are at the opposite end of the spectrum, could it be that your young master has dissociative identity disorder?" 'Gongzi' was still baffled by this matter.

Given how physicians and poison masters stood at the opposite ends of the spectrum, he couldn't understand how one could take on these two occupations simultaneously.

"What's so bizarre about that? Our young master is normally a gentle person, and he rarely argues with others. Even though he's capable of utilizing poison, unlike other poison masters, he doesn't kill everyone that he gets into a dispute with. On the contrary, he tends to resolve problems through reason and seeks to win over others via morals..."

Upon learning of the other party's doubts, Sun Qiang glanced at the other party contemptuously.

Expert? If you're truly an expert, how could you not know this? How embarrassing.

Just as Sun Qiang was about to continue introducing the various strengths of Zhang Xuan, a deafening voice suddenly sounded from the city.

"Ding Mu, I, Zhang Xuan, am here. Get out here to face your death!"

"Zhang Xuan?"

Upon hearing these words, the group on the back of the savage beast fell silent. Everyone's gazes hurriedly turned to Sun Qiang.

This is the man that you said is gentle, rarely argues with others, and uses morals to win others over?

It seemed like the other party had already slaughtered his way to the other party's doorstep!

"What is he up to?"

Wei Yuqing was stunned.

He was just gone for a few days. Why was Beast Tamer Zhang wreaking havoc in the royal palace, even threatening to kill the crown prince?

"Grand Elder Wei, let's go over to take a look!"

Of the crowd, only Sun Qiang understood the abrupt situation. Knowing that there was no time to be wasted, he hurriedly instructed.

It seemed like the young master couldn't wait any longer, so he decided to make his move today.

"Alright!"

Knowing how urgent the matter was, Wei Yuqing tapped his feet and the savage beast dashed straight toward the direction of the

voice.

...

Standing at the very center of the Heaven's Altar, Ding Mu was just about to undergo the final rituals to be officially inaugurated as the emperor when he heard those words. For a moment, he was dumbstruck.

He thought about the various forms that the other party may exact vengeance on him; assassination, life-and-death duel, poisoning...

But one thing he never expected was for the other party to do it so openly.

Before the innumerable civilians, master teachers, officials, and nobles of the Xuanyuan Kingdom, the other party fearlessly rushed here and declared brazenly that he would kill him... Was this fellow insane?

This was Xuanyuan Kingdom, his home ground! Putting aside the troops, there were many formations laid out all over as well... To dash right here fearlessly, was the other party really a genius 2-star master teacher?

"This is the master teacher who wishes to kill you?"

A middle-aged man walked over.

The head of the Master Teacher Pavilion, Luo Qianhong.

In the past few days, Ding Mu had been staying in the Master Teacher Pavilion. He had told him about the recent events, and it seemed that a master teacher desired for his death. Initially, he thought that Ding Mu was just overthinking it, but to think that the other party really came knocking.

"Un!"

Ding Mu nodded. Claspig his fist, he said, "It's a misunderstanding. I hope that Brother Luo can mediate the situation for me!"

"The other party is just a mere 2-star master teacher. He won't dare to defy my words!"

Luo Qianhong waved his hands.

There was strict ranking hierarchy to master teachers. 2-star master teachers possessed incredible standing in the kingdom, but to a 3-star intermediate master teacher like him, the other party's standing didn't mean much.

In fact, the other party had to pay respect to him in the position of a student, otherwise, he could report the matter to the Master Teacher Pavilion and have the other party's master teacher license revoked.

"I'll thank you in advance then..."

Seeing that the head of the Master Teacher Pavilion was going to stand up for him, Ding Mu heaved a sigh of relief.

"Bai Chen, go over and issue a stern warning to that young man. Don't allow him to delay His Highness's inauguration ceremony. If he doesn't know what's good for him, I permit the use of violence to deal with him!"

Luo Qianhong instructed one of his subordinates.

"Yes!"

A master teacher dressed in a long robe walked out of the crowd.

This master teacher seemed to be in his forties, and his eyes were gleaming with spirit. On the emblem pinned on his chest, there were three bright stars.

He was a 3-star primary master teacher.

His cultivation was also at Zhizun realm pinnacle.

Upon receiving the orders, Master Teacher Bai Chen turned to look at Zhang Xuan above and frowned, "Today is Crown Prince Ding Mu's inauguration ceremony, so I ask of you not to cause

trouble and leave immediately. If so, we will not pursue this matter. Otherwise, don't blame me for getting nasty!"

"I'll leave after killing Ding Mu!"

Couldn't be bothered to waste his words, Zhang Xuan leaped down the back of the Howling Firmament Beast.

Even though he didn't possess any technique capable of breaking his fall, given his Zhizun realm cultivation and powerful physical body, an altitude of a dozen meters didn't mean much to him.

Hu!

Landing on the stairs of the Heaven's Altar, the ground below cracked. After which, without any hesitation, he began walking up.

"I am 3-star Master Teacher Bai Chen. As a master teacher, you should be well aware of the rules. A lower-ranked master teacher has to unconditionally obey the commands of higher-ranked master teacher. It can't be that you are intending to defy my words?"

Upon seeing the young man disregarding him, Bai Chen's complexion turned awful. He immediately stepped forward to block Zhang Xuan's path.

He heard the conversation between the pavilion master and Ding

Mu, and he knew that the other party was a master teacher as well.

A mere 2-star primary master teacher should bow respectfully upon seeing a 3-star primary master teacher like him... Yet, to dare to disregard him altogether, how brazen!

"Scram!"

Seeing the men from Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher Pavilion blocking his path, Zhang Xuan bellowed coldly.

"You... You're courting death!"

He thought that after revealing his identity, the other party would retreat out of fear. Yet, the other party dared to ask him to 'scram'. The arrogance of the other party caused Bai Chen's face to turn livid, and he nearly erupted from rage.

Chapter 434: Bai Chen's Breakdown

Ever since clearing the 3-star master teacher examination seven years ago and becoming an elder of the Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher Pavilion, Bai Chen had been well-respected no matter where he went. Even the Xuanyuan Kingdom royal family had to welcome him with the grandest of formalities.

If a 2-star master teacher were to show the slightest disrespect to him, he would immediately bellow at the other party, and the other party wouldn't even breathe loudly out of fear.

Yet, this fellow actually told him to... scram!

Bai Chen's eyes narrowed.

Is there something wrong with your head? How dare you ask me to scram! Unforgivable!

Boom!

His aura abruptly burst out.

Master teachers, due to their State of Insight and their deep understanding of cultivation techniques and battle techniques, tended to be the strongest among all of the other occupations.

Even among Zhizun realm pinnacle cultivators, Bai Chen

definitely ranked among the top. Even though his name wasn't listed in the Green Leaf Board, he was, without a doubt, one of the top figures within this kingdom.

Yet, such an expert was insulted by a mere 2-star master teacher. How could he tolerate such humiliation? With a livid expression, the might of a Zhizun realm pinnacle came gushing out as though a massive torrent.

Kacha! Kacha!

Unable to take the pressure, cracks appeared on the stairs beneath his feet.

"You were scared into hiding in the Master Teacher Pavilion because of this fellow?"

Taking this sight in, Luo Qianhong shook his head.

He thought that the master teacher who struck so much fear in the crown prince, who was ranked first in the Young Leaf Board, that he was sent into hiding would be an incredible fellow, but from the looks of it, the other party seemed to be a fool.

Putting aside how he walked in so openly to wreak havoc on such a major affair, he even dared to spout such rude words to a 3-star master teacher. Even the word 'fool' was insufficient to describe him.

This wasn't Tianwu Kingdom, where a 2-star master teacher could reign mighty. Here, even a 3-star primary master teacher would have to lie low!

Given the innumerable rules of the Master Teacher Pavilion, just by picking a few, one could condemn a lower-ranked master teacher to the pits of hell.

"I must be blind as well..." Ding Mu uttered awkwardly.

Back then, Zhang Xuan had used a mystical treasure to crush Liang Qingming and Lin Long, and the sight of it was a huge shock to him. That was why he escaped immediately then. After which, fearing that the other party would mobilize the help of his teacher, the unfathomable Yang shi, he decisively chose to go into hiding. Yet, contrary to his expectations, the other party came alone...

If Yang shi was here, Ding Mu might still be frightened. But a 2-star master teacher, honestly speaking, meant nothing to him at all.

It wasn't because master teachers meant nothing at all. Rather, even though a 2-star master teacher was a huge asset to a Tier 1 Kingdom, to a Conferred Kingdom... it just wasn't that important.

"To charge here instead of resolving the issue at the Master Teacher Pavilion, that's a lack of rationality. On top of that, despite being a junior, he dares to talk back to a 3-star master teacher. That's a lack of respect. Furthermore, despite being the civilian of a vassal state, he dares disregards the emperor. That's a lack of

patriotism. Lack of rationality, respect, and patriotism; just with these three, we can revoke his master teacher license!"

Luo Qianhong shook his head as the disdain in his eyes deepened.

"Even so, given how he dared to provoke Bai shi, there's probably no need to revoke his license anymore!"

Nodding his head, Ding Mu's lips slowly curled up.

"Of course!"

Putting his hands behind his back, Luo Qianhong exuded an authoritative disposition as he said, "Not only do we need to teach him a good lesson, it's also about time to reorganize the Master Teacher Pavilions of those vassal Tier 1 Kingdoms. Otherwise, if even trash like him can become a master teacher, how can the prestige of master teachers be upheld?"

"You're right. It's about time for some reorganization!"

Nodding his head, Ding Mu was just about to speak when his eyes lit up. "Look, Bai shi is making a move..."

Not too far away, Bai Chen spread open his fingers, and leaving a huge gale of wind behind him, he dashed forward to claw at Zhang Xuan.

An expert pulls his weight as soon as he makes a move. With the strength of a Zhizun realm pinnacle, a towering pressure came crashing down on Zhang Xuan. Even before his blow could reach, the stairs beneath him were already cracking from the immense shock wave.

"Bai Chen's [Great Reversal Hands] is a Phantom battle technique, and it possesses immense strength. Back then, when he was still at Zhizun realm advanced stage, he managed to subdue the Zhizun realm pinnacle Zhou Tian with a single palm. This fellow is probably in for misfortune!" Luo Qianhong commented.

The intruding master teacher had a frightening aura shrouding around him, and he seemed to possess the strength of a Zhizun realm pinnacle. However, through his acute discerning ability as a 3-star intermediate master teacher, Luo Qianhong could tell that the other party was only at Zhizun realm primary stage.

Even if he utilized some physical body cultivation technique to boost his physical strength... what about it?

In the end, a strong physical body amounts to mere brute strength. One couldn't execute the full might of battle techniques through mere brute strength. When faced with an expert, the other party would surely crumble quickly.

Just as the duo was giving their comments on the battle, Bai Chen's palm was already right before Zhang Xuan.

Hmph!

Not expecting that a master teacher would attack him straight without even trying to understand the situation, Zhang Xuan's complexion darkened. Harrumphing coldly, lines of insight surfaced in his eyes.

In that instant, it was as though the other party's movements had slowed. The gaps and flaws in his movements suddenly seemed to magnify, becoming clear to Zhang Xuan's eyes.

Thus, Zhang Xuan slightly tilted his body to the side before sending a kick right at the other party's ankle.

"What?"

Bai Chen had wanted to cripple this arrogant 2-star master teacher to serve as a warning to the rest against disrespecting him, but upon seeing the other party's kick, his face paled.

His Great Reversal Hands was powerful, and it would be difficult for even those of the same cultivation realm to withstand his blow. However... no matter how powerful it was, there were still flaws to it. Zhang Xuan's kick was aimed right at the center of where his zhenqi was gathered. Once struck, no matter how weak the other party's kick was, he would immediately suffer a rebound and sustain severe internal injuries.

Having the flaw of his ultimate technique seen through in an instant, Bai Chen felt so stifled that blood was threatening to spurt from his mouth.

At this moment, he could no longer be bothered with offense anymore. After all, once the other party's kick lands, not only would his attack be rendered ineffective, he would also be crippled. Thus, he hurriedly exerted all of his force on his feet and leaped backward.

Even so, forcefully retracting his strength in the midst of an attack and leaping backward had caused the zhenqi flowing through his body to go into chaos. A sweet sensation welled in his throat and a mouthful of blood spurted out from his mouth.

"Damn it!"

Even before crossing blows with the other party, Bai Chen was already injured. He couldn't help but feel frenzied.

As a master teacher, his discernment and knowledge far exceeded that of ordinary cultivators. When had he suffered such a humiliation?

"Damn you!"

Bellowing furiously, Bai Chen shot out two fists simultaneously. His fists felt as fleeting as the wind, but undeniably, if it were to land on one, one would be crippled if not dead.

Phantom battle technique, Consecutive Breezy Fist!

In terms of burst strength, this technique was not a match for the Great Reversal Hands. However, the execution of this technique was much faster, and its reach was significantly greater as well. There weren't many obvious flaws to it, so the other party shouldn't be able to do the same as he did before.

With a savage expression, Bai Chen howled furiously.

However, just as before, before his fists could reach the young man before him, the other party's foot appeared in his sight once more.

Upon seeing the area that the kick was aimed at, Bai Chen coughed another mouthful of blood again. He was already on the verge of tears by now. Helpless, he could only hurriedly retract his offense.

The Consecutive Breezy Fist was a well-known battle technique in the Master Teacher Pavilion, and it was said to be the creation of a 4-star master teacher. Its swift movement left very few flaws for one's opponent to exploit, and even Pavilion Master Luo Qianhong would have to take on this battle technique squarely. Yet, this fellow sent a leg straight at the opening of the battle technique without any hesitation...

If the kick were to really land on him, even if he survived this blow, he would surely be lying on the bed for months.

For two consecutive kicks to land on the flaw of his battle techniques... Was this fellow's eye for discernment really that

incredible, or was it just a coincidence?

"I don't believe it!"

Howling furiously yet again, he flicked his wrist and a long saber appeared in his hands. He slashed the saber art furiously, and in the blink of an eye, afterimages appeared.

Phantom battle technique, Saber of Sorrowful Departure!

The Saber of Sorrowful Departure consisted of sixty-four moves, and the movements connected with one another, allowing one to launch a continued offense against one's enemy to push the other party into a corner. Unless one possessed an even more powerful weapon and battle technique, it would be impossible to withstand this swift saber art.

Hu hu hu!

With the saber flying all around the place, Bai Chen didn't think that the other party would be able to find the weakness in this move. However, just as this thought appeared in his mind, the other party's foot appeared in a momentary gap in the movements of the saber art yet again, headed straight for his mingmen.

"I... Pu!"

Bai Chen hurriedly retracted his saber and backed away. Once again, the sudden withdrawal of force caused his face to redden

and fresh blood spurted out of his mouth.

Three consecutive Phantom battle techniques consisting of palm, fist, and saber, and Bai Chen only ended up injuring himself. He was about to go insane.

Wasn't this fellow only a 2-star master teacher?

To see through the flaws in the battle techniques of a Zhizun realm pinnacle expert with a single look...

When did 2-star master teachers become so formidable?

If even 2-star master teachers were that formidable, then what did he, a 3-star master teacher, count as?

Bai Chen felt more and more stifled as he fought on, and he was on the verge of going insane. The crowd watching the commotion by the sides stared at one another frenziedly.

The two were both Zhizun realm experts, and on top of that, they were both master teachers. As such, their movements were extremely fast. On top of that, with their eye of discernment, more often than not, they could tell the other party's attacking trajectory and deduce the outcome before the attack even lands, and through that, determine their next movement.

In other words... the Bai shi who had just furiously declared that he would teach his foreigner a lesson, in the eyes of the crowd,

leaped backward as soon as the other party lifted his legs on the three occasions, and on top of that, he even spurted a mouthful of blood each time...

The heck! Do you think that you're a clown in the circus?

Why does it feel that Bai shi is even more unreliable than the person who came to wreak Crown Prince Ding Mu's inauguration ceremony?

"Is Bai shi... dancing?"

"It does... look like it!"

Some spectators amidst the crowd commented.

As soon as the young man raised his leg, Bai shi would jump backward. It was as though a human was toying with his own dog, and at the same time, it resembled a dancing couple as well. You advance while I retreat... and an occasional spurting of blood for a touch of intimacy...

Didn't you furiously declare that you would kill the other party?

To be jumping around the area... Are you sure you aren't flirting with the other party instead?

No one does it the way you do...

Pu! Pu! Pu!

Bai Chen was already severely injured before, but after hearing those words and seeing the bizarre gazes in the crowd's eyes, he nearly failed to catch his breath and fainted on the spot.

Dancing... Dance your head!

You're the one who is dancing, your whole family is dancing!

It only appears that way due to my battle techniques being completely suppressed by the other party's movements...

The more he thought about it, the more furious Bai Chen became. As a 3-star master teacher, a prestigious and respected figure in Xuanyuan Kingdom, even if he were to win against the other party now, he would surely become a laughingstock.

"Today, it'll be either you die or I die..."

Roaring furiously, he whipped the saber around once more. His saber gleamed, as though creating a spherical light force field around him.

With such a swift saber art, even if a pail of water were to be splashed over one, one would be able to completely deflect it.

Just as he thought that the other party would be completely helpless before this technique, he lowered his head, only to see a foot leisurely being stretched over toward him. Just as the several times before, it shot straight through the gaps in the saber art.

"The heck!"

What the heck is this?

How in the world can you know the flaws of every single battle technique I display...

Did you study all of my battle techniques before coming?

Is there a point to this?

Can't we have a hot-blooded and valiant fight?

To strike so mercilessly at my flaws, don't you know what love and concern for one's elders is?

Bai Chen cried.

Chapter 435: The Night Rain Drenches Every Traveling Downstream!

"No, that's not it. This fellow seems rather skilled!" Luo Qianhong said with a grim expression.

The inexperienced spectates the commotion while the veteran analyzes the technicalities.

Bai Chen's jumping around and occasional spurting of blood may look ridiculous in the eyes of others, but Luo Qianhong was still able to discern something about the situation.

Clearly, the young man's kick had posed a huge threat to his old friend, impelling him to back away even despite the threat of a rebound occurring.

In other words... That fellow had seen through the flaws of Bai Chen's movements and struck directly at its openings. That was why he was able to neutralize his attacks so easily, putting Bai Chen in such a difficult position.

"It can't be that... he knew that Bai shi would make a move, so he decided to study his battle techniques and cultivation techniques in advance?"

Ding Mu could also roughly tell what was happening, so he couldn't help but comment in astonishment.

"Study in advance? That's impossible! There is no cultivator who would reveal all of his cultivation techniques and battle techniques to others, even to his closest kin in case his enemies found out about it through certain means."

Luo Qianhong shook his head.

"I know of Bai Chen's Great Reversal Hands, but he has never utilized the Consecutive Breezy Fists and Saber of Sorrowful Departure before anyone, so even I am unaware of it. How could a foreigner find out about such confidential secrets beforehand?"

"That..." Ding Mu's face paled.

He suddenly recalled the various legends of that young master teacher.

Back then, he didn't think much of it. He attributed it all to the other party having a good teacher. However, from the looks of it, he was vastly underestimating the other party.

"Most probably, he might have cultivated or studied these battle techniques before, thus granting him some knowledge of its flaws..." Luo Qianhong deduced. Then, he turned to look at the crown prince and said, "Are you hiding something from me? Is that person really just an ordinary 2-star primary master teacher?"

The other party had only told him that he offended a master teacher of a Tier 1 Kingdom.

Since the other party was just a 2-star master teacher of a vassal kingdom, he didn't think much of it so he didn't investigate the matter.

To think that this negligence would result in such a huge problem.

When that fellow bellowed on top of the savage beast, Luo Qianhong thought that the other party was an ignorant, reckless fellow. Even if he was talented, given his young age, he should not pose a threat at all. However, after seeing all that had happened... he couldn't say the same about it now.

An ordinary 2-star master teacher seeing through the flaws in the battle techniques of a 3-star master teacher in an instant?

Without a doubt, Ding Mu must have misled him!

"He..."

Under the other party's interrogation, Ding Mu clenched his fists tightly and said, "I don't know much about him either, just that... it has only been ten days since he became a 2-star master teacher!"

"Ten days?"

Luo Qianhong frowned.

Logically speaking, a 2-star master teacher who had just passed the examination shouldn't be so formidable?

Peng!

Luo Qianhong was baffled. However, before he could make sense of the situation, the sound of a foot sinking into flesh sounded. He hurriedly turned around, only to see Bai Chen, unable to dodge any longer, being kicked in the face and flying forty to fifty meters back. His head smashed into the wall of a building, and the immense force caused him to pass out.

After being forced to withdraw his battle techniques halfway through executing them, he had already suffered significant damage via the rebound of his strength. Unable to withstand this humiliation, the thought of dying with the other party flashed through his head and he decided to go all out. Yet... it ended up being a one-sided event.

"Bai shi was sent flying with a single kick?"

"How is that young lad so strong?"

"Didn't they say that the crown prince is the greatest genius in Xuanyuan Kingdom? The other party defeated Bai shi despite being... under twenty, doesn't this mean that he's even more talented?"

Not one person in the crowd was able to make sense of the 'dancing' previously, and now, Bai Chen had been kicked unconscious. No matter how foolish they were, it couldn't be more apparent now that the other party's strength surpassed even that of the 3-star primary Bai shi.

The crowd stared at one another blankly.

Hualala!

While everyone was overwhelmed with shock, the young man continued walking up the stairs, closing the distance to the crown prince. Upon seeing this sight, the soldiers in the surroundings immediately advanced forward to protect their liege.

"Wait a moment!"

Seeing that Ding Mu intended to have his guards make a move, Luo Qianhong shook his hands to wave them away.

"Pavilion Master Luo..." Thinking that the other party was going to betray him, Ding Mu looked at him worriedly.

"I'll help you reconcile with him. It'll be best to end this matter peacefully."

Luo Qianhong was angry that Ding Mu didn't tell him the truth, but he was indebted to the Xuanyuan royal family and this was a debt he had to repay. Besides, it was already too late to back out of

it. Thus, he could only face it straight on.

"I'll be depending on Pavilion Master Luo then!"

Ding Mu nodded.

"Un, continue on with your ceremony and make haste. As long as you become the emperor and the royal seal is in your hands, things will become easier to settle. I'll also be in a better position to speak up for you!" Luo Qianhong said.

"Yes!"

Ding Mu nodded as he hurriedly walked toward the throne in the center.

Upon seeing him being bestowed the crown and undergoing the final rites, Luo Qianhong heaved a sigh of relief. Then, he turned around to face Zhang Xuan. Looking at the guards by the side who already had their weapon drawn, he commanded, "Clear away!"

"Pavilion Master Luo!"

Knowing the other party's identity, the soldiers hurriedly opened up a pathway and bowed.

"You must be Zhang Xuan, Zhang shi. I am the head of the Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher Pavilion, Luo Qianhong!"

Walking forward, Luo Qianhong clasped his fist, "Even though I am not aware of the grudge between you and Ding Mu, it's always better to make comrades than enemies. Since we're both master teachers, allow me to play the role of a mediator to resolve the conflict between the both of you. No matter what you request, I'll have Ding Mu prepare it!"

"The only thing I want is Ding Mu's life. As soon as I get that, I'll leave!" Zhang Xuan spoke impassively.

What compensation could match the life of his student!

"Not only is Ding Mu the crown prince, he's also about to become the emperor of Xuanyuan Kingdom. If he were to be killed, it'll surely cause chaos in the country. The population will suffer. There's no Master Teacher Pavilion that could watch idly as all of these unfold. If this matter blows up, you might even end up losing your identity as a master teacher..."

Luo Qianhong frowned.

"Scram!"

While Luo Qianhong spoke, the ceremony was still going on. It was clear that he was trying to stall for time. Zhang Xuan's complexion immediately darkened.

"The only reason I am hesitating to make a move on you is due to

your immense talent. Don't you try to overstep your boundaries!"

Luo Qianhong harrumphed.

I am already trying to spare your pride. So what if you are a genius? Do you think that I, as a 3-star intermediate master teacher and a Half-Transcension expert, would fear you?

"If you don't scram, I'll leave you in the same state as that fellow!"

Seeing that Luo Qianhong was still stalling for time, Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up. Without any hesitation, his figure immediately blurred.

Hu!

He disappeared from the spot, and in the blink of an eye, he leaped several dozen meters forward, appearing right before the other party.

Heaven's Path Movement Art.

When Zhang Xuan was fighting with Bai Chen, he didn't utilize any of the Heaven's Path battle technique. It was just to add in the element of surprise when he was facing a stronger enemy. Otherwise, once his ultimate techniques were revealed, the enemy could take precautions against them. If so, the effectiveness of the techniques would be minimized.

Reaching Zhizun realm, the Heaven's Path zhenqi became purer and more concentrated. As such, the speed and distance of the Heaven's Path Movement Art had increased significantly.

Even Luo Qianhong, as a Half-Transcension expert, was incapable of moving at such speed. Before he could even react, Zhang Xuan was already right before him.

"You..."

Luo Qianhong's eyes narrowed and he hurriedly tried to retreat.

However, before he could even take a single step back, a fist slowly magnified right before him.

Heaven's Path Fist Art!

The speed of the fist was in no way slower than the movement art, and in fact, it might even have exceeded the latter. A sonic boom resounded deafeningly on top of the Heaven's Altar. Knowing that it was impossible for him to dodge already, Luo Qianhong propelled the zhenqi in his body and sent a fist of his own to face the other party's blow.

Boom!

Both fists collided, and Luo Qianhong felt his palm turning

numb. His face paled, and he had to take eight steps backward consecutively before he managed to steady his figure.

In order to ward off the rampaging might of the other party, his feet sank three inches into the ground. Even a layer of granite on the incomparably resilient ground of the Heaven's Altar was reduced to dust under the powerful shock wave

"What a powerful fist art!"

A sharp pain came striking Luo Qianhong's shaking arm.

In that clash, he could tell that even though the other party possessed massive strength, he was still a way off from matching up to a Half-Transcension like him. What a truly fearsome fist art that was!

It was aligned with the world, and to Luo Qianhong's shock, he realized that... there were absolutely no flaws he could exploit!

Under this abrupt encounter, even a 3-star intermediate master teacher like him ended up suffering a setback.

Taking a deep breath, Luo Qianhong suppressed his chaotic breathing, and raising his palms, he charged ahead.

The fact that the other party had forced him back had embarrassed him. He mustn't allow the other party to take the initiative once more.

Boom!

The zhenqi of a Half-Transcension expert gushed out, creating a river on the Heaven's Altar. In an instant, it felt as though the air had turned viscous.

Fighters cultivate their own bodies to bring out the full strength of their physical bodies and zhenqi.

The cultivation of a Transcendent Mortal expert was very different from that.

True Transcendent Mortal experts were capable of utilizing Origin Energy from their surroundings to display a battle prowess several folds of their own strength

Using the words from Zhang Xuan's previous world, if Fighters fought with their own fists and flesh, Transcendent Mortals would be equivalent to using robots and external equipment.

There was no basis for comparison for the two.

How could a bare-handed martial artist defeat tanks and cannons?

At Half-Transcension, one wasn't able to fully utilize the strength of nature yet, but still, one was still able to unleash a might far

exceeding that of the 40,000 ding limit of Zhizun realm pinnacle experts!

In fact, even Zhang Xuan's 50,000 ding was insignificant compared to the other party.

With the full might of a Half-Transcension expert unleashed, Luo Qianhong gained control of the surroundings. Then, harrumphing softly, he dashed forward and struck Zhang Xuan with his palm.

Phantom pinnacle battle technique, Whisking Sleeves!

The warm breeze whisks willow tugging one's sleeves, the night rain drenches every traveling downstream!

This gentle palm seemed to hold no weight to it, but having gathered an immense amount of the surrounding Origin Energy, it was capable of breaking through even steel and Phantom equipment.

A Half-Transcension expert coupled with a Phantom pinnacle battle technique was a frightening force. Even an expert of the same level would find it hard to withstand the immense might.

With this move, Luo Qianhong had taken out nearly all of his aces.

Sou!

The palm flew straight toward the young man with frightening speed, threatening to land at any moment. However, not only did the other party not dodge or evade, he even dashed straight toward the palm.

"This is bad!"

The Whisking Sleeves was a very flexible battle technique, making it hard for someone to withstand its might... but even so, there was still one major flaw to it—the 'stream'.

And this fellow happened to be standing right at the location of the 'stream'!

To determine its flaws and find the location precisely in that short moment...

How was that possible!

In that instant...

Luo Qianhong's shock was indescribable.

Chapter 436: Expelling an Army with Words

(1)

"Formidable!"

On the back of the savage beast, 'Gongzi' and the others, who had just arrived, caught the sight, and even Jin Conghai couldn't help but exclaim.

"He's indeed formidable to be able to see through the flaw of the attack in an instant. Charging straight into the eye of the storm to tide through the barrage... To do that... just possessing an exceptional eye of discernment wouldn't be sufficient. More importantly, one has to have great mental fortitude!" 'Gongzi' nodded in agreement as well.

"Most probably, even this Luo Qianhong will lose. However... there are many troops in this Xuanyuan royal palace, and no matter how powerful Zhang Xuan is, he is still an individual. It'll be impossible for him to withstand the might of a country. What should we do? Should we help him?" Jin Conghai asked hesitantly.

"He must have realized this problem as well. The reason why he asked for Gu Mu's assistance is probably to ward off these soldiers!" 'Gongzi' said.

Of the many occupations, master teachers possessed the strongest individual offensive power. However, in terms of facing multiple enemies at once, poison masters reigned supreme.

With a sufficient poison stockpile, it was futile no matter how many enemies charged at a poison master.

"That should be so!" Jin Conghai nodded in agreement.

"Let's not rush in first. Given how this young 2-star master teacher managed to see through the flaws in the battle technique in a Half-Transcension expert in an instant, his eye of discernment and knowledge are indeed incredible. If he wishes for someone's assistance, he would have already rendered Yang Shi's help. Since he didn't do so, he probably wishes to do the deed alone. We'll only go in when he's unable to hold on anymore!"

'Gongzi' chuckled.

"Yes!" Jin Conghai nodded. Then, looking at the sight below, his eyebrows shot up. "Luo Qianhong has lost!"

As Jin Conghai spoke, on the Heaven's Altar, Zhang Xuan had dived out from the 'stream' and struck the other party's chest with his elbow.

Peng!

Struck with immense brute strength, Luo Qianhong's face warped together. He was immediately sent flying, crashing heavily onto the ground.

The head of the Master Teacher Pavilion, a 3-star intermediate master teacher, a Half-Transcension expert on the third place on the Green Leaf Board, was defeated in just a few breaths.

The crowd flew into an uproar.

All along, Luo Qianhong was a figure synonymous with invincible in their hearts, and he possessed innumerable fans. They thought that he would surely be able to defeat that young lad, who wasn't even twenty yet, easily. However, the one who was defeated turned out to be Luo Qianhong himself... Not to mention, he was utterly crushed.

On the top of the Green Leaf Pavilion, Elder Liao Qingxun subconsciously asked, "Pavilion head, does the first place on the Young Leaf Board... still belong to Crown Prince Ding Mu?"

"Ding Mu? Nonsense! Of course it's that Master Teacher Zhang Xuan! How can the two of them be compared with each other? You must be pulling my leg!"

Pavilion Head Dai Feng said.

"But you... you just said that there was no one who could match Crown Prince Ding Mu in the past five hundred years, and it would be like that for the next five hundred..." Elder Liao Qingxun asked in bewilderment.

It was just a moment ago that the other party praised the crown

prince up to the stars. Why did he suddenly change his tune for another person?

Wasn't this way too fast?

"Did I say that? Elder Liao, let's not bother about such unnecessary matters. Hurry up and send some men to look into that young man's background!" Having his lapse in judgement exposed, Pavilion Head Dai Feng's face flushed. He hurriedly issued some instructions to clear away his awkwardness.

"Yes!" Elder Liao Qingxun immediately walked out to attend to the matter.

The Green Leaf Pavilion was in charge of gathering intelligence on everything within the territory of Xuanyuan Kingdom. For such an expert to appear without them noticing, it was truly a failure on their part.

"His strength..."

The crowd was in disbelief. Mo Yu, who was on top of the Howling Firmament Beast, was even more so.

She had witnessed the other party's growth for herself throughout the journey.

She thought that even if Zhang Xuan were to become a Zhizun realm pinnacle within four days, he would surely be the weakest of

that tier. After all, it would take some time to adapt to one's newfound strength, and on top of that, one's zhenqi would be a little unstable as well.

Yet... Zhang Xuan actually managed to defeat a Half-Transcension expert so easily!

Was that fellow... even human?

Not only did his cultivation raise quickly, it was even reinforced perfectly. His strength was stable and deep, and there wasn't the slightest sign of instability... How in the world did he do it?

...

That strike caused Luo Qianhong severe injuries. He felt so stifled that he could go insane. At this moment, all he felt was regret.

Why was he so foolish as to listen to Ding Mu's lies?

How could a person who could force him into hiding in the Master Teacher Pavilion be an ordinary figure?

If he didn't get involved, he could at least uphold his honor. Yet, all he had done now was embarrass himself. After this incident, his prestige as the head of the Master Teacher Pavilion would surely plummet, and many people would find faults with him.

"As a 2-star master teacher, I challenged a 3-star master teacher. This can be considered as insubordination... After I'm done with the matter here, I'll offer an explanation to the Master Teacher Pavilion through crashing the pavilion myself!"

Flinging his sleeves, Zhang Xuan harrumphed.

Pavilion Crashing referred to the act of challenging an entire Master Teacher Pavilion as an individual.

Regardless of whether it was a conflict, a dispute, or unintentional disrespect, as long as one didn't betray humanity, one could crash a pavilion to absolve one of his crimes, and the headquarters would not pursue the matter.

"Crashing the pavilion?"

Luo Qianhong's face turned pale.

Even though a successful Pavilion Crashing rarely occurred, as long as it happened, the Master Teacher Pavilion would be as good as destroyed. It would become the laughingstock of the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance!

He would be forced to step down as the pavilion master, and in the worst case scenario, the headquarters might even summon him to conduct an investigation.

After all, if one was forced to the point of resorting to Pavilion

Crashing, this meant that the matter had reached a dire state.

Putong!

Luo Qianhong's body was suddenly sapped of strength, and he fell to the ground.

It was just a moment ago that he was standing majestically before the crowd, but after hearing those words, he found himself falling into despair...

What kind of monster did Ding Mu offend?

...

Ignoring the despairing Luo Qianhong, Zhang Xuan glanced forward and saw that the inauguration was about to come to an end. As such, he hurriedly advanced forward.

"Stop him!"

Seeing that even the Master Teacher Pavilion had failed to stop the other party, and the other party even declared his intentions of Pavilion Crashing, Ding Mu's complexion turned awful.

Hualala!

Along with his bellow, innumerable soldiers immediately stepped forward to surround Zhang Xuan. The swords that they drew gleamed coldly under the sun.

These soldiers weren't strong, and most of them were only at Dingli realm. However, it was their numbers that were truly impressive. On the vast Heaven's Altar, there were at least several thousands of them.

A formation consisting of several thousand soldiers... Even a Half-Transcension would have to back down before such a terrifying force.

"Zhang Xuan... be careful!"

Mo Yu's face paled.

As an individual, how could he possibly withstand an army?

A Dingli realm soldier was no threat to him, and fighting ten was just a walk in the park. However, when the numbers added up to several thousands, the nature of the event changed.

No matter how strong an individual was, there was a limit to one's stamina. In a battle of attrition, Zhang Xuan would eventually lose.

This was the reason why itinerant cultivators didn't dare offend kingdoms.

There was nothing an individual cultivator could do before the might of an entire country.

"This will be troublesome..."

Jin Conghai frowned.

As a Transcendent Mortal realm expert, it would be difficult for even him to face a few thousand Fighter realm cultivators at once.

Killing a commander was easy, but facing off with an entire army was difficult.

"Indeed, this will be troublesome. Unless... he uses the means of a poison master!" 'Gongzi' frowned as well.

Even Jin Conghai would be troubled to face so many soldiers, needless to say, the other party.

Even though the strength this Zhang Xuan had displayed was outstanding, he was still far from matching up to his subordinate, Jin Conghai.

The only way to achieve victory was to use the means of a poison master.

Otherwise, no matter how powerful he was, he would surely

eventually run dry before this huge army.

"He can't use the means of the poison master here. As a master teacher, killing the crown prince of a Conferred Kingdom is already a huge blemish on his records. I fear that if he were to use poison... he might incur the displeasure of the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters. On top of that, he might be regarded as a traitor, given the hostile relationship between the Master Teacher Pavilion and the Poison Hall..."

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing said. "Hall Master Gu Mu, if things get down to it... I think it would be better for you to make a move!"

As an elder of the Beast Hall, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing had a deep understanding of the affairs of the master teachers.

This occupation served as the moral compass of the entire continent.

To kill an inaugurating crown prince was already scandalous in itself. If Zhang Xuan were to use the means of a poison master on top of that, his reputation would be ruined.

As a master teacher, reputation was everything. Who would be willing to admit a person with questionable conduct as their teacher?

It would become a huge blemish of his life that he would never be able to wash off.

It would be nigh impossible for him to win the respect of other master teachers around the world and advance to a higher rank.

"Alright!"

Hall Master Gu Mu nodded.

He was invited here precisely for this matter. As long as he were to offer his assistance, he could be considered as to have repaid the debt of his 'senior granduncle'.

"Let's wait awhile longer first. Look at Zhang Xuan's gaze, it seems like he has an idea in mind!"

After agreeing to the matter, Hall Master Gu Mu was about to make a move when 'gongzi's' voice suddenly echoed.

"Gaze?"

Hall Master Gu Mu was taken aback. He hurriedly glanced downward and he realized that something was amiss as well.

Despite being surrounded by so many experts, the young man below didn't panic at all. Instead, he faced everything with composure.

Way too much composure.

If it was anyone else, they would have surely panicked under such circumstances.

"He must already have an idea in mind. Otherwise, he couldn't possibly remain so calm!"

'Gongzi' said. "Let's watch on first!"

"Un!" The crowd nodded in agreement as they turned their gazes to the sight below. Just as they were wondering what kind of method the young man was going to use to deal with these soldiers, a voice echoed.

"The core of cultivation lies in persistence. Only with diligence can one achieve improvement. For a Dingli realm to reach Pixue, there are three main factors. Firstly, one must accurately gauge the strength required for opening one's acupoint..."

A crisp voice echoed from the young man's mouth.

"A lecture?"

"He's conducting a lecture now?"

"Has he gone mad?"

...

Everyone was wondering what kind of strategy the young man would have against the thousands of soldiers before him. When the other party started preaching, everyone stared at one another in bewilderment.

What was this?

Surrounded by soldiers, yet he started preaching?

Everyone thought that the troublemaker would surely suffer a terrible fate, but the other party was still going strong. Everyone thought that the interference of the Master Teacher Pavilion would be able to mediate the conflict, but the other party declared that he would crash the pavilion, not sparing the Master Teacher Pavilion any pride at all...

Now, just as everyone thought that the Heaven's Altar would be washed with blood, the young man began preaching...

Can you at least obey common sense?

Your actions are way too unfathomable!

The group on top of the savage beasts were also stunned, unable to comprehend what Zhang Xuan was up to.

"No, this isn't just a lecture..."

Suddenly, 'gongzi' seemed to realize something and his face warped in shock. His body trembled lightly as he said, "This is Impartation of Heaven's Will... Expelling a Hundred Enemies With a Word, Eradicating An Army With a Phrase!"

Chapter 437: Expelling an Army with Words (2) [2in1]

"Impartation of Heaven's Will?"

Everyone was bewildered.

Those who were slightly more knowledgeable knew that Impartation of Heaven's Will was a unique ability to master teachers. As long as one's Soul Depth was above 3.0, and the content one spoke was aligned with the essence of cultivation and was devoid of errors, there was a chance it could be triggered. Once triggered, those listening to the lecture would find their zhenqi being driven automatically, resulting in their cultivation being raised subconsciously.

This sounded incredible, but in truth, all master teachers were capable of doing so.

Given how talented that Zhang Xuan was, it wasn't completely unexpected for him to be able to utilize this ability in the midst of his lecture!

"The Impartation of Heaven's Will isn't a very powerful ability. However... if one can reach a high level of mastery in it, its effects can be amazing!" 'Gongzi' said as his body trembled in disbelief.

"A high level of mastery?" The crowd was even more bewildered.

"Elder Jin should know that my physical condition hasn't been good ever since a young age, resulting in my inability to cultivate. As such, I've spent my time immersed in books, and I've read nearly all of the books accessible to me once. I once read, in an ancient manual, that when the Impartation of Heaven's Will reaches the highest level, one would be able to utilize the Voice of Truth, which was capable of striking the depths of a person's soul directly. Even if the other party was an enemy, he would willingly concede to you and address you as teacher!"

Taking a deep breath, 'Gongzi' suppressed his heavy breathing and spoke up.

"Voice of Truth?"

Everyone widened their eyes in shock.

Did the Impartation of Heaven's Will possess such incredible effects?

If that was the case, wouldn't one be almost invincible?

Regardless of who it was, one just had to conduct a lesson for the other party to submit to him. All 'living beings' in the world would be considered as one's student!

Wait a moment!

A person suddenly flashed across Grand Elder Wei Yuqing's mind

as his face paled and his eyes narrowed. With quivering lips, he asked, "Do you mean... Empyrean Kong shi?"

It was said that Kong shi's words could bring about a celestial phenomenon, and there was none who had heard his lecture who wouldn't call him teacher. Even the most formidable and most hostile enemy would immediately concede to him and willingly serve him as his student.

There was a very old legend depicting Kong shi when he hadn't reached the level of a 9-star master teacher yet. Back then, there was a person named 'Tui' who carried intense animosity against him and thus, wanted to claim his life.

He had looked into Kong shi's affairs and heard that the other party often held lectures beneath a certain tree. Thus, he decided to hide within the lush leaves of the tree with a weapon in hand, ready to strike when Kong shi appeared.

In the end, his efforts paid off. Kong shi walked over to the tree and began conducting a lecture. However, after hearing a few words, 'Tui' immediately felt embarrassed by himself, and he leaped out of his hiding spot and acknowledged Kong shi as his 'teacher'.

It was due to this legend that Kong shi earned himself the nickname of 'World's Teacher', and his name spread far and wide.

Without any exception, those who had heard Kong shi's words would eventually become his student. This was the ability that

only Kong shi possessed. Could Zhang Xuan be capable of the same feat as well?

"Indeed. The person I am referring to is Kong shi!"

Clenching his fists tightly, 'gongzi's' face turned red in agitation. "Kong shi's Impartation of Heaven's Will had reached an incredible level. With an utterance, the entire world would tremble before him. With an articulation, a gale would rage and thunder would rumble. Expelling a Hundred Enemies With a Word, Eradicating An Army With a Phrase!"

"It was said that when the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe sent its army to assassinate him, Kong shi was alone. However, without any fear, he began to preach, indifferent even when the swords and axes were before him. A few minutes later, the army of Otherworldly Demonic Tribe was completely wiped out due to infighting..."

At which, 'gongzi's' pitch-black eyes turned to look at the others, "Don't you think that what Zhang Xuan is doing resembles the plot of the story?"

"It does resemble it a bit..."

With pale faces, the crowd trembled slightly.

"What you mean is that... Beast Tamer Zhang, no, Zhang shi intends on conducting a lecture to command these soldiers to back

off?"

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing's body shuddered in disbelief.

There were many legends on Kong shi going around on the continent, and over time, they had become overly exaggerated, making it difficult to determine fact from fiction.

Thus, very few people took the stories for real.

The matter of preaching to destroy the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe was one of such common legends, and many people simply laughed it off. However, looking at Zhang shi preaching before so many enemies, their hearts started beating wildly.

"I'm not too sure either, this story only happened to appear in my mind... Since Zhang shi chose to do so, he probably has his reasons for it. After all, he can't possibly just be doing it out of boredom!" 'Gongzi' said.

He wasn't Zhang Xuan; he couldn't accurately guess the other party's thoughts.

"Now that gongzi raised the idea, I think that what you say is really true. Look!"

In disbelief, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing was just about to continue enquiring about it when Jin Conghai's voice sounded.

Jin Conghai had a grim look on his face as he stared at the scene on the Heaven's Altar beneath with a look of incredulity.

Turning his gaze over, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing was also stunned.

Half of the ferocious soldiers who had wanted to attack Zhang Xuan together suddenly fell in a daze, and as though the best treasures in the world had appeared before them, a look of delight slowly spread on their faces.

As for the other half, they went further as to dump their weapons on the ground and sat cross-legged, beginning to cultivate as per the other party's guidance.

All of a sudden, the menacing atmosphere suddenly turned into a sight of harmony.

"It... it... is actually true?"

With widened eyes and mouth agape, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing seemed to have petrified. No words could describe his shock at the moment.

Suddenly, an aura behind him began to surge intensely.

Pila pala!

The sound of beans popping echoed.

Unknowingly, drunk on Zhang Xuan's words, Sun Qiang's zhenqi became driving on its own accord, and he broke through his Dingli realm bottleneck, successfully stepping into the realm of a Pixue cultivator.

"Breaking through one's bottleneck through just words? Seems like the rumors are true..."

Taking in this sight, 'gongzi' and the others clenched their fists tightly.

If they weren't sure before, it couldn't be any clearer now.

To break through the bottleneck between Dingli and Pixue with just words...

This was similar to the ability depicted in that legend between Kong shi and the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

Even if other master teachers were able to do the same as well, it would still require accumulation on the cultivator's part and some time. But how long has it only been since Zhang Xuan started his lecture?

Twenty breaths?

Thirty breaths?

At most, it was only forty breaths. In other words, in less than a minute, not only did Zhang Xuan manage to stimulate the zhenqi in Sun Qiang body, he even successfully induced a rise in cultivation realm in the latter...

Such capability couldn't even be seen in 4-star pinnacle master teachers!

"Wait, look at those citizens around the Heaven's Altar..." Gu Mu said.

The group hurriedly shifted their gazes over to the crowd.

The citizens who were busy watching the commotion also began sitting down and meditating according to Zhang Xuan's guidance. The sound of beans popping echoed throughout the square, and it was hard to imagine how many people had managed to achieve a breakthrough during this short period of time.

These people were residents who had grown up here in Xuanyuan Kingdom, and they each possessed a dear patriotism toward the royal palace.

Thus, when the young man barged into the Heaven's Altar and declared his malicious intentions against the crown prince, they felt deep hostility for the latter. However, in an instant, all of these emotions turned into admiration and gratitude.

An itinerant cultivator, without the guidance of master teachers and formidable cultivation technique, would have to spend much effort just to break through a small cultivation realm.

But now, with just a few words from the other party, they were making this leap in their cultivation. This was something they couldn't have fathomed before.

The hostility they felt slowly faded, turning to gratitude and admiration.

Having benefitted from Zhang Xuan's guidance, the latter could be considered as half a teacher to them already.

"Ho-how is this possible?"

In the Green Leaf Pavilion, Pavilion Head Dai Feng grabbed the edges of the windows tightly as he watched the phenomenon unfold before him. His head spun in astonishment.

As the head of an intelligence-gathering agency, he had heard of the legend between Kong shi and the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe as well.

He thought that it was just a legend, but... to think that it would be true!

To remain unaware when such a formidable master teacher had come to Xuanyuan Royal City...

The Green Leaf Pavilion could close down its services already!

"No, this can't be! I'll investigate myself to see who this Zhang Xuan is... What kind of existence did Crown Prince Ding Mu offend?"

Upon thinking of this, Pavilion Head Dai Feng's lips twitched; unable to remain seated, he dashed down the pavilion.

For the Green Leaf Pavilion to be unaware of such huge news was a massive failure!

If he didn't gather all information related to the background of this fellow, he wouldn't be able to sleep well tonight.

...

"What are you all doing? Stop listening to his nonsense and kill him!"

Seeing all of the guards falling into a daze, Crown Prince Ding Mu bellowed frenziedly.

The reason why he had stationed an army on top of the Heaven's Altar was to guard against any sudden movements or mystic

treasure of that young man.

Yet, with just a single lecture, the other party had successfully left everyone dazed. What was this?

I told you all to kill him, what are you all doing listening to his lecture?

This isn't a classroom...

"I'm commanding all of you to kill him..."

Gritting his teeth, Crown Prince Ding Mu continued howling.

However, before he could finish his words, all of the soldiers turned their heads simultaneously.

"Shut up!"

Boom!

Even pebbles could be stacked up into a mountain.

With so many trained Dingli realm and Pixue realm experts roaring furiously at the same time, it was as though a strike of celestial lightning had flown across the heavens, striking down on Ding Mu.

Pu!

Struck by the sonic boom, Crown Prince Ding Mu's ears rang, and blood started flowing down his mouth and his nose.

Even his eyes turned red from the impact, and it seemed as though blood would ooze down at any moment.

Even a Transcendent Mortal expert would have to avoid a combined attack from several thousand soldiers at once, so of course a mere Zhizun realm advanced stage cultivator like him was wounded.

"You all... you all..."

Quickly retreating a dozen steps, Crown Prince Ding Mu felt as though he was going mad.

These were all his soldiers! They lived off the royal family's stipends, and they were specially groomed so that, when the need arises, they could be mobilized... Yet, all of them turned against him!

What in the world?

Ding Mu's body couldn't stop convulsing.

"You! It's all your fault!"

With reddened eyes, Ding Mu glared at the preaching Zhang Xuan with clenched jaws.

Didn't I just kill a student of yours?

Do you have to come all the way here and go to the extent of wounding a 3-star master teacher - the head of the Master Teacher Pavilion - and making so many soldiers turn against me?

Damn it, damn it!

Roaring furiously, Crown Prince Ding Mu scrambled for an idea to win back the hearts of these soldiers.

But at this moment, standing at the very center of the crowd, the young man suddenly stopped his lecture, and scanning the surroundings, he said, "Bow!"

Huala!

In that instant, several thousands of soldiers, as well as the countless spectators, immediately kneeled to the floor as respect and admiration gleamed in their eyes.

Then... their voices echoed in the square.

"Paying respect to teacher!"

...

"It's a Half-Teacher Formality! So many people are bowing to Zhang Shi earnestly..."

On the back of the Howling Firmament Beast, Mo Yu swallowed a mouthful of saliva.

She knew that young man's talent as a master teacher surpassed that of ordinary people, but she didn't expect that he would be able to win over the hearts of the soldiers on the Heaven's Altar and the surrounding crowd with just a lecture.

While a half-teacher couldn't compare up to one's true teacher, it was still a relationship surpassing that of most ordinary ones. In this world, the prestige of teachers was immense, and students were expected to treat their teachers with the utmost respect.

At that moment, Zhang Xuan was standing with his hands behind his back, watching nonchalantly at the kneeling crowd as though a conqueror. Ding Mu, who was undergoing the crowning ceremony at this instant, seemed no different from a clown.

"To remain nonchalant before an army of several thousand, and conduct a lesson to turn them into his students instead... Zhang Xuan, perhaps you might really be able to fare well in the Master Teacher Tournament and strike your name out into the world!"

Clenching her fists tightly, Mo Yu's eyes reddened in agitation.

That was a true genius! There was only a single outcome for those who refused to submit... to be crushed!

Regardless of whether you are an expert or an influential individual, before absolute might, nothing else mattered!

Mo Yu could already see the storm that Zhang Xuan would cause during the Master Teacher Tournament.

...

"With just a short moment of preaching, he's able to make so many people willingly acknowledge him as a half-teacher... On top of the absolute control over the Impartation of Heaven's Will, his Soul Depth must have reached at least 12.0! In other words... in terms of Soul Depth, he isn't inferior to a 4-star teacher?"

Luo Qianhong's teeth were clattering together. In that instant, it felt as though he had dropped into an ice vault, and he shuddered in fear.

Even though 'gongzi' was well-informed, he wasn't a master teacher. As such, he was unaware of many matters.

It wasn't that difficult to utilize the Impartation of Heaven's Will

- one only had to speak of content aligned with the essence of cultivation - but to make so many people fall into a trance and achieve a breakthrough in their cultivation simultaneously was no simple feat.

There was a high requirement for one's Soul Depth!

Putting everything aside, the insight energy contained within the other party's words felt as though a cool breeze to the ears, inducing subconscious trust into him... With just this, Luo Qianhong could conclude that the other party's Soul Depth was at least 12.0.

Every 3.0 difference in Soul Depth was a demarcation zone for a master teacher. A Soul Depth above 12.0 was equivalent to a 4-star master teacher!

A 4-star master teacher beneath twenty?

What kind of monster is that?

Isn't the other party just a 2-star master teacher?

Isn't the other party just a reckless countryside bumpkin?

If I knew how formidable the other party is, I would never have gotten involved!

Glancing at one another, Luo Qianhong and Bai Chen could see the fear and regret in each other's eyes.

If they could, they truly wanted to tear apart that Crown Prince Ding Mu at this instant.

What one feared the most was a lousy teammate that would pull one down. This time, they were truly done in badly by that fellow...

"Pavilion master, what should we do now?" Bai Chen asked with a tearful face while suppressing his injuries.

Initially, he was plotting his revenge for this humiliation. However, after seeing that the other party's Soul Depth had exceeded 12, such thoughts vanished altogether.

The greatest difficulty to the promotion of a master teacher was Soul Depth. As long as one's Soul Depth reached the mark, with sufficient time, the rest wasn't too much of a problem.

To exact vengeance on a future 4-star master teacher?

He really didn't have the guts to do so!

"Go back and make some preparations for his Pavilion Crashing... All we can wish for is for him to fail. Once he passes, we'll be doomed!"

With a resigned expression, Luo Qianhong shook his head.

If the other party failed the Pavilion Crashing, he could still sell the other party a favor and let bygones be bygones. However, once the other party succeeded, there would be nothing left for him.

What the heck was this!

How did he offend such a monster?

With a stiff body, Luo Qianhong was just about to say something more when the young man standing at the very center of the crowd coldly surveyed the surroundings before speaking with an authoritative voice.

"Since you all address me as your teacher, are you all going to stop me from killing this person?"

Becoming a Celestial Master Teacher had not just granted Zhang Xuan with the Eye of Insight, his Impartation of Heaven's Will had also made a huge breakthrough.

Once these people achieve a breakthrough in their cultivation and became his student, the rest was a walk in the park.

"We wouldn't dare!"

"If teacher doesn't wish to dirty your hands, we can do it for you!"

"Despite his position, Crown Prince Ding Mu has committed many vile deeds. We've long wished to teach him a lesson. As long as teacher gives the order, we're willing to take him down for you!"

...

Hualala!

The army of soldiers immediately opened up a pathway, and at the same time, several voices sounded here and there.

Crown Prince Ding Mu was a willful and arrogant person; he had made many unwise decisions and committed innumerable vile deeds. Even though many soldiers were aware and infuriated by it, none of them dared to voice their complaints. However, before this half-teacher of theirs, their true sentiments came pouring out.

"You all..."

Crown Prince Ding Mu's heart had already turned cold upon facing the betrayal of so many soldiers, and upon hearing those words, he nearly fainted on the spot.

The armies that other kingdoms groomed were willing to lay down their lives for the royal family, but what in the world was with the army he had groomed?

He commanded them to kill someone for him, but all of them ended up acknowledging the latter as their teacher and even offered their 'services'...

The heck!

I am the crown prince, the future emperor of Xuanyuan Kingdom! How can I be killed by trash like you?

"It won't be that easy to kill me! Give me the crown..."

Ding Mu's expression warped in savagery.

My life is my own, don't even dream about laying your filthy hands on me!

With a loud roar, Ding Mu rushed toward the old Emperor Ding Chong, snatched the crown from his hands, and placed it on his head.

At this time, he could care less about formalities or traditions. He walked directly to the throne at the center of the Heaven's Altar and sat down.

"Under the decree of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, I am now the emperor of Xuanyuan Kingdom. Let's see who dares to touch me now!"

With a face distorted by insanity, he bellowed furiously.

Sitting on the throne with a crown on his head, he could be officially considered as the new emperor of Xuanyuan Kingdom. As such, he was under the protection of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. Putting aside a 2-star master teacher, even a 4-star master teacher would have to think twice before laying a hand on him!

Otherwise, if an emperor could be killed that easily, what was the use of the existence of the alliance?

The alliance was a balance of power between the various kingdoms. While internal struggles were reluctantly overlooked, the murder of an emperor was something that was vehemently disallowed.

"This..."

"This is bad!"

The soldiers who had offered to make a move for Zhang Xuan looked at one another hesitantly upon seeing this move.

If a crown prince was killed, the emperor could still appoint a new one. However, killing an emperor was synonymous with challenging the prestige of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance.

"This..."

Zhang Xuan's face darkened as well.

He didn't expect the fellow to be so shameless as to ignore the ceremony and immediately don the crown either.

Now that the other party was the emperor, killing him would bring about a lot of trouble.

"Haha, I am now the emperor! With the backing of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance behind me, do any of you dare touch me? Are any of you qualified to touch me?"

Seeing the hesitance in everyone's eyes, Ding Mu roared in laughter. Glee reflected in his eyes.

Knowing that Zhang Xuan would go after him, he had already planned out his countermeasure. Everything he prepared was just for this day!

You might be capable, talented, strong, and above all, you have a good teacher.

However, I am not lacking either. I have an entire Conferred Kingdom behind me. I have the Myriad Kingdom Alliance behind me!

With such an identity, even if I have faulted, only the alliance had the rights to pursue it. A 2-star master teacher like you...

Aren't worthy!

"Also, all of you! Despite living off the stipends of the kingdom, how dare you all betray the kingdom? You all deserve to die!" Ding Mu roared furiously with a savage expression.

"We..."

The faces of the crowd paled.

Even though there was just a thin line between the crown prince and the emperor, of a kingdom, this gap meant everything.

The crown prince didn't possess the authority to behead so many soldiers, but the emperor did.

"Zhang Xuan, Pavilion Master Luo has proposed to mediate the matter previously but you disagreed. It's too late to change your mind now!"

After mocking Zhang Xuan, Ding Mu stared haughtily at the crowd, and with the disposition befitting of an emperor, he declared, "I'll give you all a chance to make up for your mistakes. As long as you all kill this intruder, I'll pardon you all for your previous sins. On top of that, I'll even confer a nobility on the one who finishes him off and grant him a life of utmost prestige and

wealth!"

"Why? Do you all still intend on going against my orders, the orders of your emperor..."

Seeing the crowd hesitating, Ding Mu gazed downward at the faces below, suppressing the entire square with the majesty of an emperor.

Weng!

However, before Ding Mu could finish his words, a jade token flew out. Then, bright light burst forth from it, forming a gigantic image.

The image consisted of just three words — Myriad Kingdom Alliance.

Following which, a deep voice reverberated in the air.

"The succession of the throne requires a prior announcement and a complete ceremony. Ding Mu has disregarded the rules and snatched the imperial authority willfully. The alliance declares his inauguration invalid!"

The voice echoed loudly throughout Xuanyuan Royal City, and even the clouds seemed to tremor slightly under it.

"This is... a decree from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance's envoy!"

Someone uttered amidst the crowd.

Chapter 438: The Great Xuanyuan Formation

Silence.

Ding Mu had just declared his unparalleled authority within the kingdom when the decree of the envoy arrived the next instant. Everyone was dumbfounded.

The Myriad Kingdom Alliance was several hundred thousand kilometers away from Xuanyuan Kingdom, and even when riding on a Zhizun realm pinnacle savage beast, it would still take several dozen days of journey to travel here. This envoy... sure is efficient...

"This... Impossible! How can this be possible..."

While jaws were falling to the ground, Ding Mu's final string of rationality finally snapped.

Are you playing with me?

I had just barely managed to become the emperor and force the other party to step down. Victory is right before me, and yet, such a twist just had to occur at this moment. With this, no matter what I do, I'll just be regarded as an unofficial and unrecognized sovereign!

Conferred Kingdoms were vassal kingdoms to the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, and if the latter refused to recognize his position, nothing he said would be useful!

"Your Majesty, that... is an authentic decree from the envoy of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. I've seen it before..."

Seeing the doubt on Ding Mu's face, an official walked over with a nervous look and reported.

The decree of the envoy couldn't be forged. The words 'Myriad Kingdom Alliance' possessed a unique authority to it that no one else could imitate.

With just a single look, one could determine whether it was authentic or not.

"Men, the Left Minister is spouting nonsense and shaking the foundation of the country. Kill him!"

Ding Mu was already in a frenzied state, and the words of the official pushed him off the edge. He immediately bellowed a command.

"Your Majesty..."

The crowd stared at one another hesitantly, not knowing what to do.

"You all..."

Seeing that everyone was disregarding his orders, Ding Mu's eyes reddened in rage. Just as he was about to roar furiously once more, an impassive voice sounded in the air.

"Since the Myriad Kingdom Alliance refuses to recognize you, that means that your position is unofficial. No one will listen to the commands of a fake emperor!"

Turning around, he saw Zhang Xuan gazing at him with cold eyes.

In truth, Zhang Xuan was also bewildered by the situation.

Before coming, he had already prepared himself for the worst situation. Regardless of whether the other party became the emperor or not, he would make his move.

Of all things, he didn't expect the Myriad Kingdom Alliance's involvement in this matter.

The appearance of the decree meant that Ding Mu's ascension to the throne was unlawful, and the Myriad Kingdom Alliance wouldn't pursue the affair even if he were killed.

"So what if these useless fools refuse to obey my commands? Do

you think that I'll fear you just because of that? You might be strong, but it won't be that easy to kill me!"

Having lost the throne, the backing of the Master Teacher Pavilion, and being unable to mobilize his subordinates, Ding Mu knew that he had no choice but to resort to brute force.

His face warped as though a ravenous wolf as he glared fixedly at the young man before him. Then, he abruptly reached forward to grab the jade seal.

With the jade seal in his hands, his disposition changed all of the sudden. In an instant, he felt as if he were a towering mountain standing before everyone else.

Even a Half-Transcension expert would have to back off before the powerful aura he was emitting at this moment.

"The reason why our Ding Clan was able to build a massive kingdom that no other kingdoms dare to attack and maintain our lineage for more than a millennium isn't just purely through brute force... It is because of a formation!

"The infrastructures in Xuanyuan Kingdom are positioned in a way that aligns with the sun, moon, and the stars, forming a grade-4 primary formation! You wish to kill me? Dream on! Even if I can't become the emperor, I'll pull you down along with me!"

Roaring furiously, the jade seal in his hands flew in the air,

triggering the formation. In an instant, it seemed as though the entire capital had come to a life. An incredibly powerful pressure fell down from the skies.

All of the sudden, the crowd in the square suddenly felt something sealing their movements. At the same time, a powerful pressure overwhelmed them, threatening to kill them if they were to make an unwise move.

"It's... the Great Xuanyuan Formation! He's actually triggered the Great Xuanyuan Formation!"

Amidst the crowd, an official's face suddenly paled. His body slackened, and he fell weakly to the ground.

"Great Xuanyuan Formation? What's that?"

There were many people who were unaware of its existence, and a person asked anxiously amidst the crowd.

"It's said that the founding ancestor of Xuanyuan Kingdom was a formidable formation master. After uniting the lands and building the kingdom, he chose this location to build the capital. Using the mountains, rivers, and the infrastructure as the formation flags, he built an immense formation. Even a Mortal Transcendent expert would die easily if he were to be caught in it!"

"This formation can only be triggered by the imperial seal, and it's the final line of defense of the kingdom. No one here will be

able to withstand its immense might..."

The official trembled uncontrollably as he spoke.

Previously, when Ding Mu ordered them to kill the other party, no one listened to him.

Now that he had activated the formation and trapped everyone within it, if he intended to take revenge, who could stand against him?

Hearing those words and feeling the violent might of a formation shrouding them, the crowd's faces warped in fear.

They thought given the disparity in strength between the other master teacher and Crown Prince Ding Mu, even if no one were to obey his commands, there was nothing for them to worry about. No one could have expected for the latter to have such an ace up his sleeves.

A grade-4 formation could kill even a Mortal Transcendent expert, so how could mere Fighter realm cultivators like them withstand it?

And without sufficient strength, it was impossible for them to break out of it.

It looked like... they were doomed!

...

"You are... an envoy of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance?"

While a pandemonium had broken out below, in the air, on the back of a savage beast, Wei Yuqing looked at the young man with tightly-clenched fists.

From the attitude of the others toward this 'gongzi', he could tell that the other party's standing was definitely extremely high. Otherwise, Gu Mu's teacher, as a 4-star poison master, wouldn't act so deferentially to him.

But even so... He didn't expect the other party to be an envoy from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance.

An envoy holding a decree was representative of the head of the alliance. If anyone dared to challenge his authority, he could kill them as he pleased!

In other words, he possessed unparalleled authority within the territories of the alliance.

Yet, to think that the person wielding such immense authority would just be a teenage child...

If he hadn't seen the other party throwing out the token

personally, he would have never believed it to be true.

"Un!"

'Gongzi' nodded silently. At this moment, his gaze was directed at the formation below, and a frown appeared on his face.

A moment later, he turned to the elder beside him.

"Is there any way for you to break this formation?"

"Gongzi, you should also know that I'm not adept at formations!"

Jin Conghai's face flushed in embarrassment.

Even though he was a Transcendent Mortal expert, his occupation was a poison master. His knowledge of formations was severely limited. On top of that, the formation below was incredibly massive, and even if a 4-star primary formation master were to be here, it would be hard for him to stop the formation.

"This formation makes use of the mountains and rivers in the surroundings to augment its might. On top of that, it hasn't been used before ever since it was set up, and over time, a massive amount of spiritual energy had accumulated within it. Not just me, I'm afraid that... even if Pavilion Master Kang were to be here, he would be helpless before it!"

After a moment of hesitation, Jin Conghai spoke his analysis.

Even though he wasn't adept in formations, as a Transcendent Mortal expert of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, he still possessed a decent discernment ability. It wasn't too difficult for him to determine how fearsome the formation below was.

Even the head of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance Master Teacher Pavilion, Pavilion Master Kang, would be helpless before it.

And Pavilion Master Kang was the most capable formation master throughout the Myriad Kingdom Alliance!

Through this, the fearsomeness of the formation was apparent.

"I know that this formation is formidable, but... do you have any way to save him?" 'Gongzi' couldn't help but ask.

Deciphering and stopping a formation was very much different from saving a person from a formation. In which case, the latter was much easier than the former.

Jin Conghai shook his head and said, "This formation has been nourished over a long period of time, granting it immense might. Life and death hinge on just a single thought of the one controlling the formation! To break it, it'll require sixteen Mortal Transcendent experts standing at sixteen different locations... Even if it's just saving someone from within, it would require at least five people at the same level as me to make a move

simultaneously..."

On top of the grade, the scale also determined the strength of the formation.

The larger the formation set up, the more powerful it would be.

This was the reason why formation plates were lacking in might.

The formation below covered the entire Xuanyuan Royal City, extending for a length of several hundred kilometers. On top of that, it had accumulated a frightening quantity of energy over the course of a thousand years, making it a fearsome weapon.

It would already be a blessing if a Mortal Transcendent expert could survive a killing formation of such might. Saving someone within... was completely impossible!

"Then... what should we do? You also know that he's Liu Cheng!"

Hearing that even his guard was helpless before this immense formation, 'gongzi' panicked.

"Don't panic. If it comes down to it, I'll just have to try barging into it..." Jin Conghai gritted his teeth.

He knew of the gratitude that 'gongzi' felt toward Physician 'Liu Cheng'. The other party had specially traveled from the Myriad

Kingdom Alliance here just to look for him. If the other party were to die before him, wouldn't he die of regret?

"What do you mean by barging into it?"

At that moment, a doubtful voice sounded within the room. Turning around, the group saw that Sun Qiang was done with his cultivation and had stood up once more.

Under Zhang Xuan's Impartation of Heaven's Will, not only had Sun Qiang reinforced his Pixue realm cultivation, he had even opened up three acupoints. Thus, he was in good spirits.

Sun Qiang had been on the verge of breaking through Dingli realm for a while now, so Zhang Xuan's Impartation of Heaven's Will was exceptionally effective on him.

"Your young master is trapped in Ding Mu's formation, and he's in an extremely precarious situation now. If you can contact Yang shi, you should hurry up. I fear that... Zhang shi might be coming to his limits already!"

Seeing that Sun Qiang was done with his cultivation, 'gongzi' hurriedly advised.

In truth, he regretted not getting Jin Conghai to make a move on Ding Mu when he threw out of the envoy's decree earlier on.

If he had done so, such a situation wouldn't have occurred.

He was here to repay the favor, but not only did he fail to achieve anything, he even landed his benefactor into a precarious situation. How could he have the face to live on if the other party really died? In his view, if not for the decree he threw out, Ding Mu wouldn't have been forced to activate the formation.

"Formation?"

Glancing out of the window to look at the sight below, Sun Qiang brushed the matter off impassively, "Seeing your grim faces, I thought that it would be some serious affair. Turns out that it's just this. Don't worry, the young master is fine!"

Hearing those words, Jin Conghai staggered and nearly fainted. "Do you know how powerful this formation is?"

The one below is your young master! He's trapped in a formation which even a Mortal Transcendent expert would be unable to break out off! Yet, how can you remain so nonchalant? Are you truly that brave, or is there something wrong with your head?

"I have no idea!"

Sun Qiang waved his hands nonchalantly, "But that doesn't make a difference. A small formation like this doesn't mean anything at all!"

Tianxuan Kingdom had no formation masters at all, so how could

Sun Qiang know anything about formations. Even if the most basic formation was laid out before him, he still wouldn't be able to decipher it at all.

But even though he knew nothing at all, Zhao Ya and the others had recounted the events at the Lin Clan back then to him at least a few hundred times. On top of that, he had also personally witnessed the young master kicking the formation at the residence of Lu Chong's ancestors to a stop.

He knew that no one could match up to the young master in the field of formations.

It might be something fearsome to the others, but to the young master... it was just a walk in the park.

"Doesn't mean anything at all? A small formation? How can you call Zhang shi your young master and behave like that?!"

'Gongzi's' face darkened and he nearly erupted on the spot.

Chapter 439: Lucid Mind

Upon hearing that their young master was trapped, other subordinates would surely hurriedly plead with others to save him. Yet, not only was this fellow not worried, he even looked at them with such an expression...

Are you a subordinate or an enemy?

That was a formation that even Pavilion Master Kang would find hard to break! Yet, to view it with such nonchalance, are you that brave or do you desperately crave for your young master to die here?

'Gongzi' was about to faint from anger, and by the side, Wei Yuqing's eyes were also rolling around the place.

If not for Zhang Xuan entrusting his subordinate to him personally, he would have thought that this fellow was an imposter.

Probably, he was the only one in the world who could watch idly as death loomed above his master.

"What's wrong?"

Sun Qiang couldn't comprehend why the other party had reprimanded him.

"I'll go then! I am indebted to Yang shi, and now that his student is in trouble, I can't sit idly by the side..."

Seeing how this cretin didn't have any intentions to look for Yang shi to save his young master, Gu Mu and the others decided to disregard him altogether.

"You are intending to save the young master?"

Sun Qiang finally came to a realization, and a look of disdain appeared on his face, "I didn't expect you all to be so inexperienced... And to think that one of you is the envoy from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance... It's just a formation, what's the big deal? With the young master around, you all really don't need to worry at all!"

"Inexperienced?"

A fellow from an unranked kingdom who didn't even know what a formation was dared to look at the envoy from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance with disdain?

The crowd was so furious that they nearly spurted blood.

You are the one who's inexperienced, your entire family is inexperienced!

'Gongzi' clenched his jaws together, tempted to tear the fatty before him apart.

But other than having him look for Yang shi, there was no better solution.

Thus, suppressing his anger, he began to explain, "This is the Great Xuanyuan Formation, and nourished over a course of thousand years, it's the first time it's being activated..."

"Oh!"

After hearing the explanation, Sun Qiang simply nodded his head indifferently and said, "Now that you're done, you should take a rest!"

"You..."

'Gongzi' nearly flew into a rampage.

It was as though the fellow before him didn't understand the human language at all. He had wasted his breath on him!

Damn it!

Forget it, this wasn't the time to be lashing out on this kind of heartless fellow. Saving Zhang shi took priority.

As such, he decided to disregard the fatty and turned to look at Jin Conghai instead, "Elder Jin, I might require your strength on

this matter. Here is a decree representing my identity. If Ding Mu insists on making a move, you are free to kill him on the spot..."

Just as 'gongzi' was issuing some instructions to Jin Conghai, intending to resolve the matter the brute way, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing and Gu Mu suddenly exclaimed.

"What?"

"Gongzi, look..."

Seeing the expressions on the duo, 'gedeng', 'gongzi's' heart skipped a beat. Thinking that perhaps Zhang Xuan might have already died in that short moment of delay, he hurriedly turned his gaze down and his eyes widened in shock.

That humongous formation which seemed as though it would wipe out everything within it suddenly vanished into thin air. The sight below was completely calm, as though nothing had happened at all.

Zhang Xuan was still walking forward slowly, and at this moment, he was already less than ten meters away from Ding Mu.

"What happened?"

Rubbing his eyes furiously, 'gongzi' was astounded.

It was just a moment ago that he saw the formation ravaging, threatening to claim the lives of those inside at any moment. Yet, why did it disappear all of the sudden?

Did he see wrongly?

"Just now... Just now..."

Wei Yuqing's face was completely pale, and his lips were quivering. It seemed like even speaking was a great difficulty for him at the moment.

"What happened?" Jin Conghai couldn't help but ask as well.

"It seems like... Zhang Xuan stretched out a finger, and then... it simply turned out like this!" Wei Yuqing was on the verge of tears.

Despite witnessing it with his own eyes, the situation simply seemed even more unbelievable to him.

What the heck was this?

With just a light tap of a finger, the ravaging formation came to an instant stop.

Didn't Jin Conghai and 'gongzi' just praise this formation to the skies...

Didn't they say that even the pavilion master of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance Master Teacher Pavilion couldn't stop him, and it would require at least a dozen Transcendent Mortal experts to forcefully halt it?

Yet, the other party stopped it so easily! Was he dreaming?

"Stopped it with a single finger?"

Jin Conghai and 'gongzi' nearly bit down on their tongues out of shock. Just as they were about to ask if the two of them had seen wrongly, Sun Qiang walked forward with both hands behind him and a proud look on his face.

"Our young master might have never taken the formation master examination, but this kind of weak formation means nothing to him at all..."

Then, he stared at the group disdainfully once more.

How inexperienced.

Envoy? 4-star poison master? Pui!

In the end, you all still panic over minor situations like this!

"You..."

Being looked down, 'gongzi' was just about to rationalize it out with this fellow when Jin Conghai pointed below with a grim look. "Gongzi, look!"

Afraid that he would miss out anything just like before, he ignored Sun Qiang and turned his gaze downward as well.

...

"You... Impossible!"

While 'gongzi', Jin Conghai, and the others were dying from shock above, Ding Mu was also on the verge of suffering a stroke.

The Great Xuanyuan Formation was his greatest backing. One of the main reasons why he hurriedly ended the inauguration ceremony was so that he could gain control of the jade seal...

He thought that once he activated it, even the envoy would mean nothing at all. Yet, before such a formidable formation could work its course, the other party had already halted it with a light tap...

Brother, who the hell are you?

Without raising your legs, you could scare Bai Chen into leaping away; with a single hit, you caused the Half-Transcension Pavilion Master Luo Qianhong to vomit buckets of blood; and now, you stopped such a formidable formation with a single finger...

Are you sure that you are a 2-star master teacher and not the reincarnation of Kong shi?

"You should have expected this when you tried to kill me back then!" Ignoring the other party's shock, Zhang Xuan continued advancing forward.

The Great Xuanyuan Formation might be vast and powerful, but just like any formation, it had a core.

Since Ding Mu activated the formation via the jade seal on the Heaven's Altar, naturally, the core was somewhere around here as well. Through the Library of Heaven's Path, it wasn't too difficult for Zhang Xuan to determine the precise point to strike and stop it.

"You won't know who's the victor until the very end..."

Recovering from his shock, a savage expression reappeared on Ding Mu's face.

Knowing that the formation was already useless, he threw the jade seal on the floor. Then, clenching his fists tightly, he propelled his cultivation and cloaked his hands with a layer of zhenqi.

Phantom battle technique, Heaven Shattering Fist!

Ding Mu was only at Zhizun realm advanced stage, but through this battle technique, he was able to take the top spot of the Green Leaf Board. This showed how formidable this battle technique was.

"Die!"

Knowing the other party was a tough adversary, Ding Mu drove his cultivation to his limits and took the initiative.

Boom!

The air was tightly compressed under his might, causing a deafening sonic boom. In the blink of an eye, his fist was already right before Zhang Xuan, headed for his chest.

"Strong!"

"He's at Zhizun realm pinnacle as well... To think that he'd made a breakthrough as well!"

Upon seeing the massive strength the Ding Mu displayed, the crowd was stunned. Many of those who were aware of the affairs of the crown prince realized that the crown prince wasn't at Zhizun realm advanced stage as per the rumors, he had already reached pinnacle!

"It's not that he made a breakthrough. Rather... he used some kind of secret art!"

Luo Qianhong had a grim look on his face.

He was a good friend of the other party, and the other party had been hiding in the Master Teacher Pavilion the past few days. As such, he had a good grasp over the other party's strength.

Even though he had reached Zhizun realm advanced stage for some time now, it would still take at least half a year before he could make another breakthrough.

Thus, the only plausible explanation was that he had used some kind of secret art.

Rumor has it that the royal family had a secret art which burned their blood essence in exchange for a temporary increment in their cultivation by one to two small realms

"Even so, that Zhang Xuan... is in trouble!"

He clenched his fists tightly.

The reason why Ding Mu could reach the top of the Young Leaf Board wasn't due to his position as the crown prince but because he possessed true strength.

Even without resorting to such secret art, he could defeat a Zhizun realm pinnacle expert. With this leap in his cultivation,

even Luo Qianhong himself would find it hard to triumph over the other party.

That Zhang Xuan had only managed to injure him through exploiting the flaws in his techniques and his powerful physical body. On the other hand, Crown Prince Ding Mu, due to the Spirit Blood Body Nourishment Formula of the royal family, possessed a powerful physical body as well.

Regardless of whether it was his cultivation technique, battle technique, or physical body, there was no flaw to be picked from him.

It would be impossible for Zhang Xuan to defeat the other party using the same means.

"This is your ace?"

Just as Luo Qianhong thought that Zhang Xuan would be unable to hold his ground against Ding Mu, the young man's calm voice sounded.

After which, the young man flexed his fingers and grabbed forward, as though capturing a rabbit trapped in a cage.

Hu!

Ding Mu's fist art was dispelled in an instant. Then, as though Ding Mu was a little chicken, Zhang Xuan grabbed at his neck,

lifting him up.

What Heaven Shattering Fist, Phantom pinnacle battle technique, blood-burning secret art...

Before that young man, it was as laughable as playing house!

"This is... the realm which even 4-star master teachers find it hard to achieve, [Vanquishing Facade, Lucid Mind]?"

Narrowing his eyes, Luo Qianhong's face reflected his disbelief.

Chapter 440: Ding Hong [2in1]

Most cultivators were able to reach a State of Mind at the level of 2-dan Heart of Tranquil Water.

But to exceed that level was extremely difficult.

It was said that only upon reaching the level of a 4-star master teacher would one have the chance to make the breakthrough.

Heart of Tranquil Water only allowed one to remain impervious to external factors. The higher realm to that was 'Vanquishing Facade, Lucid Mind' that Luo Qianhong just exclaimed.

Upon reaching this level, one would be able to peer through chaos to see the crux of the matter. At the same time, with a clearer mind, one's analytical power would grow substantially stronger.

Even though it was far from a match for the Eye of Insight, it was useful in the sense that it provided a master teacher with a greater degree of rationalizing abilities.

For example, no matter how knowledgeable one was, it was impossible for one to have seen all questions in the world and know the answers to them.

However, if one had reached this state, one could easily deduce the motive of the one setting the question and the content which

the question was trying to assess a person on. By seeing through all of the facade, one would be able to provide the most accurate answer.

Knowledge is omnipresent around us, only waiting to be analyzed!

As such, this realm was also known as [Lucid Analytical Realm].

This Zhang Xuan was able to see through Ding Mu's Heaven Shattering Fist and blood-burning secret art, immediately aiming for the neck instead. Clearly, he had seen through all of the facades contained within the moves and the purposes each of them served. Even if the person hadn't reached the Lucid Analytical Realm yet, he wasn't too far from it.

This explained why the other party could neutralize his Whisking Sleeves so easily.

As for whether it was the higher realm, Eye of Insight, this was something that he dared not even imagine.

After all, this was an ability that even most 6-star master teacher didn't possess. How could it appear in a 2-star master teacher who wasn't even twenty yet?

Even so, just the thought that the other party had reached Lucid Analytical Realm had already left him incredibly shocked.

What kind of monster was the other party?

...

"Yo-You..."

Having his neck grabbed, a mix of shock and fear surfaced on Ding Mu's face.

He thought that by using the blood-burning secret art and his most powerful move, even if he wasn't a match for the other party, he would still be able to stand his own ground. He didn't even consider the possibility of being subdued as soon as he made a move.

"Don't kill me! I was bewitched by that woman, Lin Long, back then. I was blind to have made a move on you... As long as you don't kill me, I'll give you whatever you want. Anything that is within Xuanyuan Kingdom's means, I'll give it to you! Even a hundred or two hundred spirit stones isn't a problem at all!"

The young man before him had defeated Luo Qianhong, dispelled the Great Xuanyuan Formation, and even his final ace was crushed that easily. This time, Ding Mu truly felt frightened and helpless.

Xuanyuan Kingdom was qualified to deal with spirit stones, and as long as the other party was willing to spare him, no amount of wealth was too much.

"Spirit stones?"

Zhang Xuan shook his head.

If not for Lu Chong taking the blow for him, he would already have been dead. Could spirit stones be used to trade for the welfare of his student?

"Since I said that I'll kill you, then pardon me... Only one fate awaits you!"

Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up as he exerted more force through his fingers.

"AH... Great grandfather, save me!"

Seeing that Zhang Xuan was about to really make a move, Ding Mu's face paled and he hurriedly shouted for help.

"Let him go!"

As soon as Ding Mu shouted for help, a loud bellow reverberated across the entire city.

It sounded as though the rumbling of a thunder, shaking the ground and buildings in the area.

Frowning, Zhang Xuan glanced over.

The voice came from the depths of the royal palace right in front of him. Deep and steady, those words seemed to wield an immense pressure.

Even despite Zhang Xuan's recent massive breakthrough, he found himself on the verge of caving in from the pressure.

"Strong..."

He clenched his fists tightly.

Accompanied with the Eye of Insight and Library of Heaven's Path, Zhang Xuan could match up to even a Half-Transcension at his current strength.

Yet, the other party was able to induce such a sensation within him with just words. Without a doubt, the other party's cultivation definitely exceeded that of Luo Qianhong, reaching that legendary realm.

He didn't expect such an expert to exist amidst the Xuanyuan royal family!

...

"Great grandfather? Could it be... He isn't dead yet?"

Atop of the savage beast, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing's face darkened.

"You know this man?"

'Gongzi' turned to look at Grand Elder Wei Yuqing.

"Un!"

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing nodded. "There's a ranking board for the strongest experts within Xuanyuan Kingdom known as the Green Leaf Board, and on it, despite being a Half-Transcension expert and a 3-star intermediate master teacher, Luo Qianhong was only in the third place!"

"Third place?"

'Gongzi' and Jin Conghai glanced at one another.

They had seen the pavilion master's strength for themselves previously when he made a move on Zhang Xuan. Even though he was defeated by Zhang Xuan in an instant, his true strength shouldn't be underestimated.

Among Half-Transcension expert, he definitely ranked amidst the top.

Yet, with such strength, he was only placed at the third rank. Who could the other two in front of him be?

"The one ranked second is not a cultivator, but the greatest backing of Xuanyuan Kingdom — a Half-Transcension savage beast, [Steelback Winged Dragon]!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing said.

"You're referring to that powerful savage beast which possesses a trace of the Dragon Bloodline?"

Jin Conghai frowned.

Similar to the Nightmare Beast, the Steelback Winged Dragon also possessed the Dragon Bloodline. Even though it was extremely thin, it granted them a portion of the overwhelming strength of the Dragon Tribe. It possessed steel wings as sharp as knives, and its speed was one that would leave the mouths of onlookers agape. Thick scales filled its body, granting it an impenetrable defense. On top of that, it possessed immense strength and stamina as well.

From birth, it was already destined to reach Half-Transcension realm. In fact, with its powerful physical traits, it could even match up with some of the weaker spirit beasts.

"The other Conferred Kingdoms may not know much about the Great Xuanyuan Kingdom, but the Steelback Winged Dragon is common knowledge. This was precisely the reason why, despite Emperor Ding Chong's weak personality, no kingdom dared to turn their blades to us!"

As the Grand Elder of the Beast Hall, there was no way Wei Yuqing wouldn't know about such a powerful savage beast in Xuanyuan Kingdom.

If not for this formidable backing, even if Zhang Xuan didn't do anything at all, this kingdom would have been annexed by the other Conferred Kingdoms already.

"But if the Steelback Winged Dragon is only ranked at second place, could the first place refer to..." Gu Mu turned his gaze over in astonishment.

"That's right, it's the person who had just spoken, Crown Prince Ding Mu's great grandfather, the 178th emperor of Xuanyuan Kingdom... Ding Hong!"

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing clenched his fists tightly as he said, "This Ding Hong could be considered a genius among geniuses. Eighty years ago, he was already the number one expert in the kingdom, just that, one day... he faded out of public view. Even I had thought that he was already dead and the reason why his name remained on the Green Leaf Board was out of remembrance... Yet, to think that he was still alive!"

"The number one expert eighty years ago? But his lifespan..." Gu Mu widened his eyes in shock.

Making the breakthrough to Zhizun realm meant that one's level of existence had reached greater heights, and there would be an overall enhancement in one's physical attributes. Even though

one's lifespan would be increased as well, this increment was minimal, perhaps just a few years at best. Under normal circumstances, a hundred years was already the limit for most Zhizun realm experts.

If Ding Hong was the number one expert of the kingdom eighty years ago, he must have at least reached the Half-Transcension realm at that time. To be still living now...

Didn't this mean that he was already beyond a hundred years old?

"If it's really him, he should be one hundred and fifteen this year!" Grand Elder Wei Yuqing said.

"A hundred and fifteen? Transcendent Mortal 1-dan... Prolonged Longevity realm?" Jin Conghai asked.

The Transcendent Mortal realm, also known as the Surmounting Mortality realm and the Mortal Metamorphosis realm, meant overcoming the limits of a mortal and reaching a brand new level of existence.

This was the terminology used for the realms, and just like the Fighter 9 dans, it had nine different realms to it as well.

1-dan Prolonged Longevity realm.

Upon reaching this level, there would be a huge leap in one's

level of existence. At this realm, one would be able to absorb the spiritual energy in the world to heal the various traumas cultivating had brought to them, and through such means, enhance their longevity.

At Fighter realm, even if one had reached Zhizun realm pinnacle or even Half-Transcension, surpassing the century limit was an extremely difficult task.

But if one were to reach this higher realm, one's longevity could potentially be doubled to two hundred years.

Given that Ding Hong was still alive and kicking despite exceeding the hundred year mark, he must have made the breakthrough to become a full-fledged Transcendent Mortal expert.

To think that there would be a Transcendent Mortal expert in Xuanyuan Kingdom!

"There is a huge gap between the strength of a Transcendent Mortal cultivator and a Half-Transcension cultivator. Gongzi, should we help him?" Jin Conghai asked grimly.

Even though it was just a difference of a small cultivation realm, it represented the difference between a mortal and a transcendent being. How could the two begin to compare with one another?

Zhang Xuan might be able to defeat a Half-Transcension expert

easily, but a Transcendent Mortal was definitely beyond his means.

With such a huge difference in their level of existence, there was no way his fighting prowess could match up to Ding Hong.

It was just like how the possibility of a human defeating a tiger bare-handed was practically zero.

"Wait a moment first, let's see how he deals with this matter. We'll only help him when things look dire!" 'Gongzi' shook his head.

The other party had defeated a Half-Transcension expert easily and stopped the Great Xuanyuan Formation with just a single finger. The means that he had displayed had piqued 'gongzi's' curiosity. He was interested to see if the other party had any unique methods to deal with a Transcendent Mortal expert.

Besides, Jin Conghai was a person who had traveled quite far in the path of a Transcendent Mortal. With his strength, it wasn't difficult for him to subdue a Prolonged Longevity realm in an instant. Thus, there was no harm in doing so.

"Un!"

Nodding his head, Jin Conghai turned his gaze back to the field below.

Gu Mu and the others also anxiously shifted their sights.

...

"You're a master teacher, right? Can you sell me a favor and let this unfilial progeny of mine off? I'm willing to offer you two thousand spirit stones in exchange for this favor!"

After a moment of hesitation, the deep and ancient voice echoed once more.

"Two thousand spirit stones?"

The breathing of the crowd hastened.

The value of a spirit stone was immense. It was difficult to trade for a single one even with a massive sum of gold.

Yet, the other party offered two thousand spirit stones immediately. This was truly a generous offer.

With so many spirit stones, one could buy up the entire Tianwu Kingdom!

To be giving away wealth equivalent to the value of a Tier 1 Kingdom just to save Ding Mu, it was clear to see how important the latter was to him.

Upon hearing those words, Zhang Xuan was stunned as well.

Even when he was at the peak of his wealth, he only had fifteen spirit stones in his possession. He knew how valuable spirit stones were, and this two thousand spirit stones would surely contribute greatly to his cultivation.

"That's right, two thousand spirit stones. I believe you should understand the value of my offer!"

The elder spoke slowly and deeply. "Besides, you have nothing to gain from killing him. Rather, you'll face my relentless pursuit for revenge then. You are a wise man, so I believe you should know what to choose!"

The other party's voice may seem calm, but it was laced with threat.

If Zhang Xuan truly intended to make a move, Ding Hong would surely step forward and kill him.

Hearing the other party's threat, Zhang Xuan clenched his fists tightly together.

Zhang Xuan loved money, and he was in dire need of spirit stones as well. However, he would never compromise his own principles for such material wealth.

If he were to do so, how could he face Lu Chong when he finally

wakes up?

Kacha!

With a slight exertion of force, his grip tightened and a crisp sound echoed. Before Ding Mu could make a single sound, his head tilted and he breathed his last breath.

Putong!

The corpse was thrown to the ground.

"You... Audacious!"

Not expecting that this young fellow would actually kill Ding Mu despite all that he had said, Ding Hong couldn't hold back his rage anymore. The restraint present in his voice previously vanished, and his bellow reached even the heavens, threatening to tear the sky apart.

Hualala!

Hearing that thunderous voice, the crowd who was watching the commotion suddenly lost their balance and fell to the ground.

The rage of a Transcendent Mortal caused even the skies to pale!

"This is bad..."

"He should have just exchanged for the two thousand spirit stones!"

"Indeed, he's really doomed this time. That's a Transcendent Mortal! No matter how powerful he is, it's impossible for him to be a match for Ding Hong..."

...

An uproar broke out beneath the Heaven's Altar as well.

Clearly, they didn't expect Zhang Xuan to kill Ding Mu either.

Even more so, they didn't think that there would be such a formidable expert behind Xuanyuan Kingdom.

With just a loud bellow, he was able to make so many cultivators topple down. His strength was terrifying.

Even though Zhang Shi had shown them plenty of miracles before, no one thought his prospects looked good.

There was too huge of a gap between Transcendent Mortals and Fighters. It was like a battle between a god and a mortal, there was completely no hope of victory.

"Transcendent Mortal... Zhang Xuan, I've brought harm to you..."

Mo Yu's face paled, and her body trembled uncontrollably.

She knew that Xuanyuan Kingdom was powerful, and without the strength of a Zhizun realm pinnacle, it was best not to cause any trouble here. However, she couldn't have imagined that the famous old ancestor who had rattled the entire kingdom during his time was actually still alive.

And on top of that, he was stronger than he was back then.

Putting aside the increment in one's strength upon reaching Transcendent Mortal realm, Transcendent Mortals could tap into the energy existent in the surroundings, making no Fighter a match for them.

As long as this old ancestor made a move, no matter how many aces Zhang Xuan had up his sleeves, it would be futile.

Master teachers had the ability to see through flaws, but it didn't guarantee their omnipotence.

It was just like how everyone knew that the easiest way to capture a city was to destroy its walls... but without sufficient strength, could one do so?

It was one thing to know the flaws, but it was another thing to be

able to exploit them.

Upon reaching Transcendent Mortal, one's physical attributes would have raised to a whole new level. On top of that, most weaknesses would be hidden as well. Even if one was able to find an opening, without sufficient speed and strength to get past the enemy's defense, it would be impossible to get to it.

Roar!

Just as everyone was anxious and worried about what was to happen, the deafening roar of a beast sounded from the depths of the royal palace. Then, a bolt of lightning streaked out from within, and a figure appeared in the aerial space above the Heaven's Altar.

It was a massive aerial savage beast with a length of ten meters, and when its gigantic wings were spread open, it spanned a width of thirty meters. Thick scales covered its entire body, and the sharp aura it exuded was greatly intimidating.

"Steelback Winged Dragon?" Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up.

Having read so many books on beast taming, Zhang Xuan instantly recognized this beast that was at the pinnacle of savage beasts.

Similar to the Nightmare Beast, it was a Half-Transcension savage beast which possessed the Dragon Bloodline as well.

However, this fellow was significantly stronger, and its nature was even more callous as well.

It was already frightening that there was a Transcendent Mortal old ancestor in the royal palace. To think that there would be such a formidable savage beast on top of that.

As expected of a Conferred Kingdom. Zhang Xuan had truly underestimated the other party.

A man stood proudly on the back of the Steelback Winged Dragon

This person wasn't as old as his voice sounded, and he looked like he was only in his fifties this year. The aura he exuded felt as vast as the ocean, making it impossible for one to peer into its depths.

Upon reaching Prolonged Longevity realm, one's aged body would also become younger as well.

Even though this old ancestor of Xuanyuan Kingdom was already beyond one hundred years old, he didn't look as old as Zhang Xuan expected.

"It's indeed him..."

Luo Qianhong's eyes narrowed.

Even though he had never met this old ancestor before, he had

seen his painting before. All along, he had thought that the other party was dead. Yet, not only was the other party still alive, he was still vigorous.

"I gave you a chance; it's a pity that you didn't grasp it well!"

Clenching his jaws tightly, Ding Hong stared down at Zhang Xuan coldly.

He doted on that great grandson of his greatly. Otherwise, he wouldn't have made Ding Chong bestow him with the position of the crown prince so early on.

Yet, this fellow actually dared to kill his beloved grandson right before him... Unforgivable!

Boom!

The voice reverberated from the heavens, falling down upon Zhang Xuan like a plummeting massive hammer.

Deng deng deng deng!

Zhang Xuan felt a stifling sensation in his chest, as though someone had struck it forcefully. His face paled and he was forced to retreat several steps backward to ward off the force.

A Transcendent Mortal expert was already capable of

manipulating the strength of the world. It wasn't difficult for him to launch an attack from a distance.

It was just like Su shi back then. With a single sound, he made the Gold-scaled Lightning Beast fall from the sky and dealt Liang Qingming severe injuries.

Ding Hong's cultivation was not a match for Su shi, and Zhang Xuan was significantly stronger than Liang Qingming as well. Even so, he was still knocked back by the other party's words. The strength of a Transcendent Mortal was indeed fearsome.

"I didn't grasp the chance? Pardon me, but even if I could redo it, I'd still kill him!"

Driving his Heaven's Path zhenqi, Zhang Xuan dispelled the pressure on him and glanced into the sky.

"Eye of Insight!"

Lines of insight flowed within Zhang Xuan's eyes as he tried to look into the flaws of the other party, but as expected, it was futile.

At Zhang Xuan's current level, he could only peer into the flaws of those at most a small cultivation realm higher than him, meaning a Half-Transcension expert. His Eye of Insight was completely useless against a Transcendent Mortal expert at his current cultivation.

Despite knowing that his ability as a master teacher was completely useless to him at the moment, Zhang Xuan didn't panic. Without any hesitation, he turned to the Library of Heaven's Path.

"Flaws!"

Hu!

A book appeared in his mind.

The other party was exerting pressure on him through his voice, and this could be considered as a battle technique of some sort. Thus, the Library of Heaven's Path was able to compile a book on him.

Zhang Xuan hurriedly flung it open and browsed through it.

After a quick look, Zhang Xuan's face turned grave.

There were many flaws on Ding Hong detailed in the book, but given Zhang Xuan's current cultivation... even if he knew of them, he still couldn't pose a threat to the other party.

It was just like how even if an infant knew that the crotch was a man's weakness, putting aside whether the infant could strike it or not, even if he could, he might not be able to injure the other party.

Zhang Xuan's current strength totaled up to 50,000 ding, but wounding a Transcendent Mortal expert with such a level of strength was still nigh impossible.

In other words, this was a hopeless battle for Zhang Xuan!

"Since you wish to die, I'll grant your wish!"

Seeing how this fellow still dared to talk back to him under such circumstances, Ding Hong harrumphed coldly.

Roar!

The Steelback Winged Dragon immediately flapped its massive wings violently.

Sou!

The immense body of the beast swooped down as though an arrow released from a bowstring, and in the blink of an eye, it was already right before Zhang Xuan, threatening to sweep across Zhang Xuan with its dagger-like wings.

Judging from the shrilling sound, it seemed that even metal would be torn apart under the sharpness of the wings, lest to say, a human.

Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes. While his Heaven's Path Golden Body 2-dan granted him incredible defense, he knew that his body wouldn't be able to withstand this attack.

Hu!

Heaven's Path Movement Art.

In the blink of an eye, he appeared at a distance several dozen meters away, thus dodging this assault.

Roar!

Missing the attack, the Steelback Winged Dragon immediately turned around in midair and darted toward Zhang Xuan once more.

Zhang Xuan retreated once more.

Having the same situation happen again and again, Zhang Xuan's face turned grim.

Even though the number of times Zhang Xuan could use the Heaven's Path Movement Art had increased due to the rise in his cultivation, he knew that there was a limit to his stamina. If this went on, it would just be a matter of time before his zhenqi ran out.

"It's not a solution to continue dodging like that but... a Half-Transcension realm savage beast and a Transcendent Mortal expert... Zhang shi isn't a match for either of them!"

"Indeed, Zhang shi is in a bad position!"

A tense look was on everyone's faces.

Putting aside the Transcendent Mortal realm Ding Hong, even the Steelback Winged Dragon, placed second on the Green Leaf Board, wasn't an existence that Fighter realm cultivators could deal with.

Putting aside its powerful defense and overwhelming offensive ability, more importantly, it was able to fly...

No matter how powerful Zhang Xuan was, he could only withstand its assault. After all, it was impossible for Zhang Xuan to fly into the skies and knock it down.

"Will... Zhang shi be killed?" someone amidst the crowd asked.

Zhang shi had just helped him achieve a breakthrough, and he owed him a debt of gratitude. Yet, upon seeing that the other party was in a difficult situation, he wasn't able to do anything at all. Thus, he panicked.

"If Zhang shi knocks the Steelback Winged Dragon down, there might still be a chance... But is that possible?" another person

replied.

The Steelback Winged Dragon was a Half-Transcension realm savage beast. Its aerial capability was its greatest strength, so how could it give up on it?

The only possibility was for one to cripple its flying capability.

But... even if one possessed sufficient strength to break through its nearly impenetrable defense, one had to be able to catch up with it first.

In other words, the Steelback Winged Dragon was already in a position that made it impossible to lose. If this went on, Zhang Xuan would only be killed.

The crowd fell silent. They were anxious, but there was nothing they could do.

"You sure dodge fast, let's see how many more times you can avoid its attacks!"

Since the crowd was able to analyze this much, Ding Hong, being a Mortal Transcendent expert, was able to do so as well. Sneering coldly, he stared at Zhang Xuan haughtily as if he were looking at a dead person.

So what if you could run fast? Can you exceed the flying speed of the Steelback Winged Dragon?

"You're right, I can't go on dodging its attacks forever!" Zhang Xuan abruptly came to a stop. Lifting his head, he said, "Since that's the case... I'll stop dodging then!"

"You'll stop dodging? Hahaha, accept your death then!"

Harrumphing coldly, Ding Hong was just about to get the Steelback Winged Dragon to advance toward Zhang Xuan when a sharp voice suddenly echoed from below.

"Moo!"

Putong!

Before Ding Hong could react, his footing suddenly disappeared. Along with the Steelback Winged Dragon, he plummeted head down into the ground, raising a huge cloud of dust.

Chapter 441: I'll Make a Breakthrough Then!

Complete silence.

The spectators and soldiers on and below the Heaven's Altar, numbering up to several tens of thousands, were all dumbfounded.

With just his words, Old Ancestor Ding Hong was able to force everyone here to submit to him. The valiant sight of him entering the field on the Steelback Winged Dragon was engraved deep into everyone's mind.

Everyone thought that Zhang Xuan would be crushed helplessly, but before Ding Hong could even wound the other party, he ended up falling from the sky...

The heck!

Could things get any more ridiculous?

For an expert like you, walking out from the royal palace wasn't a big deal. Yet, you just had to put on a show and enter the field riding on the Steelback Winged Dragon. On top of that, you chose to fly at such a high altitude in an attempt to play god and bring heaven retribution onto others... Yet, retribution did appear, but the target seemed to be you.

All gazes immediately turned toward the silhouette who was stabbed more than half a meter deep into the ground. Everyone's mouths were twitching, and they couldn't help but wince at the tragic sight.

Even Transcendent Mortal experts were incapable of flight. Falling from an altitude of fifty to sixty meters unprepared might be insufficient to kill him, but it was more than enough to incapacitate him for a short moment.

It was fortunate that Ding Hong had a strong cultivation. At that height, even a Zhizun realm expert would find himself crippled.

"The Steelback Winged Dragon is a Half-Transcension savage beast, why would it suddenly lose its stability and fall from the skies?"

Recovering from the astonishment, bewildered exclams echoed amidst the crowd.

It wasn't like this was an untamed savage beast intentionally trying to cause damage. The Steelback Winged Dragon had already served as Xuanyuan Kingdom's guardian beast for several centuries, and it was a respected guardian deity in the hearts of all the citizens.

For such a noble savage beast to plummet from the skies all of a sudden and crash so heavily that it couldn't even push itself up anymore...

Even though they had witnessed this sight with their own eyes, they had no idea what to make out of this matter.

"It seemed like... that fellow dropped right after Zhang Shi released a bizarre sound!"

"Indeed! I heard it as well. It sounded crisp and clear, reminiscent of the sound a cow makes, as well as a deafening thunder on the ground. To cause the Winged Dragon to panic like that... I wonder what it was?"

Some of the keener people who noticed the entire proceedings of the matter commented.

The savage beast was perfectly fine a moment ago, but after that crisp call from Zhang Xuan, it suddenly plummeted to the ground. Could there be a relationship between the two?

While the crowd was struck by astonishment, Old Ancestor Ding Hong finally recovered and pulled himself out from the ground. He was so furious that he could explode from rage at any moment.

He thought that as long as he killed Zhang Xuan on the Winged Beast, he would be able to win the hearts of the people and restore ultimate power to the Ding Clan. Yet, never in his dreams did he expect to nearly die from a fall.

If he were to become the first Transcendent Mortal to die from falling from too high up, he wouldn't have the face to meet anyone

even as a ghost.

Wiping away the dust from his face, he glared at the young man with reddened eyes. If looks could kill, holes would have appeared on Zhang Xuan.

"Kill him!"

Glancing at the Steelback Winged Dragon which was still recovering from the impact, Ding Hong roared.

However, right after he issued the command, he realized a hint of fear in the gaze of the Winged Dragon directed toward the young man in front of it. Putting aside killing him, it seemed as though it didn't even dare approach him.

"You trash!"

Ding Hong was infuriated.

What the heck was this!

As the bearer of the Dragon Bloodline, you always act so arrogantly in the royal court, disregarding everyone else. Yet, you act so cowardly before an enemy?

Can you be any more useless?

Back then, you even slaughtered a spirit beast before! The other party is just a Zhizun realm pinnacle expert...

Ding Hong bellowed at the Winged Dragon several more times, but this fellow seemed to be adamant not to make a move even if it spelled his death. Suppressing his anger, Ding Hong turned his gaze over to Zhang Xuan.

"To be able to persuade it not to make a move on you, I admit that you're a capable man. But since that's the case... I'll do it myself then. It's your honor to die by my hand!"

Ding Hong didn't know the reason behind the attitude of the Steelback Winged Beast, but it had to be a doing of the brat before him.

But so what?

The other party was just a Zhizun realm pinnacle cultivator. Even if he could defeat a Half-Transcension expert, he was still a huge way from matching up to a Transcendent Mortal like him. With the huge disparity in strength, no matter what aces the other party had up his sleeves, it was all useless.

Boom!

Harrumphing coldly, Old Ancestor Ding Hong charged forward to make a move.

With a thrust of his hand, rampaging zhenqi infused with the Origin Energy from the world formed a gigantic handprint, and it charged straight toward Zhang Xuan.

Spirit low-tier battle technique, Origin Energy Palm!

Back then, on the back of the savage beast, the other party had used long-range sonic offensive means on him. Even though it was powerful, the distance had whittled down the might of the attack significantly so Zhang Xuan wasn't able to get a clear gauge on the other party's strength. However, at such close proximity, he finally understood how fearsome Transcendent Mortals were.

In an instant, Zhang Xuan felt overwhelming energy rushing toward him, causing his entire body to stiffen from the pressure. Under such a pressure, even driving his own zhenqi felt arduous.

"I'll have to go all out!"

Transcendent Mortal experts possessed great control over the environment they were in, and knowing this, Zhang Xuan knew that it was impossible for him to escape. Thus, he drove his Heaven's Path zhenqi to its maximum capacity and faced the other party's palm with his fist.

Heaven's Path Fist Art!

Propelling the strength of his muscles, zhenqi began gushed forth from his fist. An immense strength exceeding 60,000 ding burst

out as though a massive primordial beast tearing open the heavens, colliding with the other party's Origin Energy Palm.

Peng!

Under the intense collision, Zhang Xuan couldn't help but retreat ten steps back. His face flushed and he nearly spurted a mouthful of blood.

Even though he had massively improved in the past few days, and his strength exceeded that of ordinary Zhizun realm pinnacle experts as well, he was still far from matching up to a true Transcendent Mortal.

There was no way he could remain unharmed from that blow.

"You withstood the attack? Not bad. Let's see how much more can you take then!"

Ding Hong was astonished to see Zhang Xuan survive his Origin Energy Palm.

It was no wonder that this fellow could defeat even Pavilion Master Luo Qianhong. His strength was indeed formidable.

Even Half-Transcension experts would definitely end up severely injured under his Origin Energy Palm. Yet, the other party was only forced to retreat several steps.

On top of that, he realized that the other party's physical body was on par with him.

A mere Zhizun realm cultivator actually possessed a physical body on par with a Transcendent Mortal?

How can that be?

Boom!

Even though Ding Hong was surprised, there was no hesitation in his movements at all. His next palm came striking down as soon as he saw Zhang Xuan successfully warding off his first attack.

Upon noticing the absurd resilience of Zhang Xuan's body, he chose to exert more force this time around. Before the palm print even reached the other party, a huge fissure had already been torn on the ground.

"Origin Energy Palm is formed via the ability of a Transcendent Mortal to manipulate the Origin Energy in the world. Flaws: No. 1, if one only cultivates it to the level of an initiate, one won't be able to control it perfectly..."

The various flaws of the other party's battle technique surfaced in his mind.

The Origin Energy Palm possessed immense might, but as a Spirit low-tier battle technique, it was impossible for Ding Hong to fully comprehend it with his cultivation as a Prolonged Longevity realm cultivator. Even if he had studied it for a significant period of time, he would only be able to comprehend the basics.

And in truth, he was a far way off from reaching Consummation.

The Master Teacher Pavilion had allocated various tiers of mastery for battle techniques, and they were namely: Novice, Initiate, Minor Accomplishment, Major Accomplishment, and Consummation.

At Novice, one had a surface understanding of the battle technique and could forcefully execute it.

At Initiate, one would be able to bring out the essence of the battle technique but was still lacking in control.

At Minor Accomplishment, one's understanding of the battle technique had already reached a deep level, and it could be relied on as a life-preserving means.

One must know that most of the cultivators had only reached Minor Accomplishment in the mastery of their battle techniques.

As for Major Accomplishment and Consummation, without decades of practice, it would be impossible to reach that level.

Ding Hong might have devoted several decades to the Origin Energy Palm, but due to the lack of a teacher to guide him and his insufficient cultivation, his comprehension of the skill was severely limited.

Thus, he was only able to reach the level of Initiate.

"Initiate Origin Energy Palm has a total of seventeen flaws..."

Knowing that it would just be a matter of time before he died if he were to face Ding Hong face on, Zhang Xuan hurriedly looked for a flaw in Ding Hong's technique.

The current him wasn't a match for a Transcendent Mortal at all. Only through exploiting the enemy's flaw was there a possibility of him retaliating.

"Found it!"

Suddenly, Zhang Xuan caught sight of something and his eyes gleamed in delight.

Hu!

He finally found a flaw that he could exploit. Without any hesitation, he immediately stepped aside, dodging the other party's assault, and with a flick of his wrist, he whipped out a spear from his storage ring and stabbed it straight toward the opening.

Heaven's Path Spear Art!

He had obtained quite a few weapons from the Lin Clan, and most of them were stored in his storage ring in case of emergency.

It was their time to shine now.

That flaw was actually an opening in between the interval of the execution of the previous attack and the charging of the next Origin Energy Palm.

His spear whizzed and stabbed forward like a valiant dragon.

"Formidable! That Zhang shi's eye of discernment is indeed fearsome!"

On top of the back of a savage beast, Jin Conghai witnessed Zhang Xuan making this pierce and his eyes narrowed.

Despite being a Transcendent Mortal expert, even he was unable to find a flaw in Ding Hong's battle technique yet. For Zhang Xuan to be able to find it in an instant, his battle sense was truly terrifying.

"However... it's a pity that his offensive power is too weak. Even if he augmented his strength with a spear art, it's futile!"

Recovering from his shock, Jin Conghai shook his head.

"Futile?" a bewildered 'Gongzi' asked.

Since Zhang Xuan had found the other party's flaw, why would it be useless?

"That's right!"

Placing his hands behind him, Jin Conghai spoke with a deep gaze, "The Transcendent Mortal Realm... isn't as simple as it seems!"

...

Weng!

Unaware of the conversation of the duo above, Zhang Xuan's spear dived swiftly toward Ding Hong's opening as though a roaring dragon charging toward its prey.

"Hmph!"

Ding Hong narrowed his eyes and he hurriedly retreated.

Huala!

For a moment, the air seemed to have solidified. It was as though the spear was trapped in a bog all of a sudden, and its movement abruptly slowed.

Hu!

The next moment, Ding Hong grabbed the end of the spear.

Kacha!

Exerting his zhenqi, the Phantom spear broke into countless splinters instantaneously. At the same moment, Zhang Xuan felt an ache in his chest, and he was knocked back more than a dozen steps.

"Damn it!"

Zhang Xuan clenched his fists tightly.

He had found the flaw, and the spear was aimed and timed perfectly. Yet, he was still unable to hurt the other party at all.

Transcendent Mortals were indeed fearsome existences. No Fighter, even at Zhizun realm, was a match for them.

"You're indeed incredible to make use of the temporary lapse in between my attacks against me. I truly didn't expect it!" Ding Hong turned his gaze over to Zhang Xuan.

It was impressive for a Zhizun realm cultivator to find the flaw of a Transcendent Mortal cultivator so quickly. If not for Ding Hong having reached Transcendent Mortal realm, he would have surely been injured by the previous attack.

"However, you're too weak! If your cultivation was at Half-Transcension, I might have been injured just now. However, it's a pity that... at Zhizun realm pinnacle, you're still a long way off! Even if you can find my flaws... what can you do to me?"

Ding Hong sneered coldly, "As a show of respect for you, I'll face you with my full strength!"

"You're right!"

Zhang Xuan faced the other party's threat nonchalantly. He simply shook his hands and said, "My offensive capability is indeed far too lacking. With the cultivation of a Zhizun realm pinnacle, it's impossible for me to wound you!"

"Since you said that I'd require the strength of a Half-Transcension..."

"I'll make the breakthrough now then!"

Upon saying so, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and threw something resembling a seed into his mouth.

Boom!

In that instant, it was as though he was set ablaze.

Chapter 442: Making Breakthroughs As Though Drinking Water, Reaching New Realms Like a Walk in the Park!

The gap between a Zhizun realm and Transcendent Mortal wasn't just limited to strength... perception, spirit, and many other factors were included as well.

If Zhang Xuan remained at Zhizun realm pinnacle, then even if he were to find all of the flaws in the other party's battle techniques and cultivation, it would still be impossible for him to defeat Ding Hong.

No matter how many times he tried, the same scenario would just occur.

There was only a single solution then... Making a breakthrough!

Since that was the case, there was no reason for Zhang Xuan to hesitate anymore!

He had already compiled and read through the Zhizun realm Heaven's Path Divine Art. The only reason why he hadn't made a breakthrough yet was due to the lack of spirit stones to augment his cultivation.

If he were to attempt to make a breakthrough via absorbing from spirit stones, it would definitely take several hours before he could reach Half-Transcension.

Even if he had sufficient spirit stones, it would be impractical for him to do so now.

Unless he made use of that treasure——

Crimson Flame Lotus Seed!

This object was formed through countless years of accumulation of spiritual energy by the Crimson Flame Lotus at the vein of the Red Lotus Range. It contained an immense amount of energy, to the point that it even raised the success rate of a Fighter reaching Transcendent Mortal realm by twenty percent.

Since it was effective even on Half-Transcension experts, it wasn't too difficult to imagine how terrifying it was.

The reason why Zhang Xuan hadn't used it yet was because he was saving it for his breakthrough from Half-Transcension to Transcendent Mortal. However, he had no other choice but to consume it now.

Boom!

The lotus seed melted as soon as it entered his mouth, and a violent energy immediately flowed into his meridians.

Propelling the energy according to the circulation method of the

Heaven's Path Divine Art, Zhang Xuan's aura grew stronger rapidly, and in an instant, he broke through his bottleneck.

Zhizun realm intermediate stage!

Zhizun realm advanced stage!

Zhizun realm pinnacle!

...

He was originally at Zhizun realm primary stage, but as the Heaven's Path Divine Art greedily took in the energy flowing through his veins, in less than ten breaths, he consecutively broke through three small realms, reaching Zhizun realm pinnacle.

"Thi-this..."

"That's is Zhizun realm! It would take at least an entire decade for one just to raise his cultivation by one small realm... Yet, in the blink of an eye, his cultivation rose from Zhizun realm primary stage to Zhizun realm pinnacle?"

"Is he still a human? How can this be..."

"AH! OUCH... What are you doing?"

"I just wanted to check whether I was dreaming or not!"

"Since you're the one who wanted to ascertain whether you're dreaming or not, why did you pinch me?"

"Wouldn't I feel pain if I pinched myself?"

"..."

...

Upon seeing this sight, everyone fell into a frenzy.

Their lips twitched uncontrollably.

They had seen people making a breakthrough in their cultivation before, but consecutively within such a short period of time? Never.

Others took several years just to raise their cultivation by one small realm. On the other hand, when that young man realized that he wasn't a match for Ding Hong, he immediately raised his cultivation realm from Zhizun realm primary stage to Zhizun realm pinnacle...

Can you get any more exaggerated than that?

It was no wonder you dared to face the entire Xuanyuan Kingdom alone. With such capability, you can already bash through the heavens!

...

"Making breakthroughs as though drinking water, reaching new realms like a walk in the park?"

'Gongzi's' face paled, and his body trembled in agitation.

He was the envoy of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, and having spent most of his time reading books from a young age, he knew quite a lot about the talented figures on the continent. However, this was the first time he had seen or heard something as absurd as this.

To achieve breakthroughs in the midst of a battle... How in the world did he do it?

"The Crimson Flame Lotus Seed... But even though it harnesses a great amount of energy, it shouldn't possess such great effects!"

Gu Mu's eyes were also completely widened.

He had obtained the lotus seed along with his senior granduncle at the Red Lotus Range back then, and he was given one of them. Thus, he was well-aware of its prowess. Even though it harnessed a gigantic amount of energy, it was insufficient for one to raise one's

cultivation by so many realms consecutively.

That fellow seemed to be defying common sense...

Is the other party mad, or are my eyes playing tricks on me?

"I've only seen this kind of breakthrough in a book before. It was said that a humble cultivator had once chanced upon the lecture of an 8-star master teacher out of some fortuitous coincidence, and he managed to achieve consecutive breakthroughs in his cultivation... To think that I would bear witness to such a sight myself!"

Jin Conghai swallowed a mouthful of saliva.

He was a Transcendent Mortal expert with a great amount of worldly experience, but upon seeing this sight, even he couldn't help but be shocked as well.

If not for his powerful self-control, he might have fainted on the spot.

Grand Elder Wei Yuqing's body stiffened in shock.

"The energy harnessed within the Crimson Flame Lotus Seed is violent and destructive, as though an ignited gunpowder. The moment it seeps into one's vein, one would have to drive the energy furiously around. With a slight misstep, one might potentially implode and die... Yet, to achieve so many breakthroughs consecutively without any hesitation, I can't

fathom how deep his understanding of the Zhizun realm is. How confident does he have to be to dare to take such a risk? Also, what kind of cultivation technique was he cultivating to be capable of absorbing such a vast amount of energy in this short period of time?"

Achieving a breakthrough in one's cultivation wasn't just about absorbing energy. More importantly, one had to have a deep understanding of the cultivation realm, one's cultivation technique, and possess absolute control of one's body.

To break through three small realms in a single shot, Grand Elder Wei Yuqing found it difficult to imagine how deep the other party's understanding of the Zhizun realm was.

One must know that consuming such nourishment to attempt to achieve a breakthrough was a double-edged sword.

If one was unable to drive the energy properly, the energy could potentially clog up at a certain location and eventually result in one's death.

There were countless precedents of cultivators being unable to fully absorb the nourishment they had consumed and exploded.

Even if the Crimson Flame Lotus Seed might be gentler compared to many of the other consumable treasures, its violent nature made it far from suitable for the direct consumption for a Zhizun realm primary stage cultivator.

Yet, not only was that fellow fine after eating it, he even managed to achieve a breakthrough. What kind of powerful cultivation technique could allow a Zhizun realm primary stage cultivator to take in that vast amount of energy contained within it?

And how confident was he in the cultivation technique to do so without any hesitation?

"Look, he's attempting to break through to Half-Transcension!"

Just as Grand Elder Wei Yuqing was overwhelmed by shock, shock exclams echoed from the bottom. Thus, he hurriedly turned his gaze over.

Despite having broken through three small realms previously, that violent energy within Zhang Xuan's body didn't fade. Rather, it seemed to be gathering strength to make that final breakthrough to Half-Transcension.

He was attempting to surpass Zhizun realm with just a single Crimson Flame Lotus Seed!

...

While everyone was overwhelmed with shock, Ding Hong nearly died from shock.

When he said that only a Half-Transcension could hurt him, he

was trying to provoke the other party so as to build a powerful reputation for himself among the citizens present here. Yet...

That fellow really made a breakthrough, not to mention, it all happened in just a few short breaths!

In his short, momentary daze, the other party's cultivation soared from Zhizun realm primary stage to pinnacle, and from the looks of it, it was about to reach Half-Transcension as well.

If he knew how frightening the other party was, he wouldn't have wasted so many words on him.

Wasn't this courting death?

From that fellow's sharp and precise movements, if the other party were to succeed, there would be a high chance that he might really breathe his last breath here.

"Attempting to achieve a breakthrough right before me? You must be dreaming!"

Roaring furiously, Ding Hong clenched his fist and shot it straight toward Zhang Xuan without any hesitation.

Phantom pinnacle battle technique, Merchant Luo Fist!

Spirit battle techniques were far stronger than Phantom battle

technique, but given Ding Hong's cultivation as a Prolonged Longevity primary stage cultivator, it was nigh impossible for him to cultivate the Origin Energy Palm to the mastery of Minor Accomplishment, and thus, he was unable to bring out the full strength of it.

In that sense, using a Phantom battle technique that he had reached the level of Consummation in was far more practical.

Merchant Luo Fist was a technique created by a merchant from Luoshui. Even though no one knew the true name of the merchant, the might of his fist, which was comparable to the ceaseless, rapid tides of a river, became a legend throughout Xuanyuan Kingdom.

Eventually, before the merchant's death, he passed this fist art on to the Xuanyuan royal family, and it had been passed on ever since then.

Zhenqi began gushing out ceaselessly from Ding Hong, filling the entire Heaven's Altar. For an instant, it felt as though an endless tide of water was surging through the area.

Amidst the endless water, Zhang Xuan seemed as though a solitary boat that could possibly capsize at any moment.

"Shameless!"

"How can someone be so despicable as to launch an assault when the other party is making a breakthrough in his cultivation..."

"And to think that he's a Transcendent Mortal expert, how shameless!"

Not expecting Ding Hong to attack at this crucial moment, the crowd suddenly exclaimed anxiously.

It was dishonorable for a Transcendent Mortal to strike his enemy when he was defenseless, not to mention, the other party was a member of the royal family.

"Ding Hong's life hinges on a thread now. If Zhang shi were to succeed, he would be put in a dire state. No one can blame him for making a move at such a crucial moment!"

Jin Conghai was infuriated, but he could understand the other party's stand. Once Zhang shi succeeded in making the breakthrough, he would surely be defeated.

In the end, this was a true battle, not a duel!

"Gongzi..."

Jin Conghai anxiously looked at 'gongzi'.

"Since he dares to attempt a breakthrough at this moment, he must have a countermeasure. Let's just watch on..." 'Gongzi' understood Jin Conghai's intentions, but he shook his hands and

rejected it.

The young man below had left him astounded time and time again. Every single time that he was placed in a desperate situation, he would reverse it in the blink of an eye.

So this time... Would the same situation happen again?

After all, without any aces up one's sleeves, no sane person would dare to attempt a breakthrough during a battle.

"Yes..."

Jin Conghai nodded and turned his gaze back to the battle. Then, his body froze before trembling slightly, "Shit! He isn't trying to block the other party's attack at all!"

Below, Zhang Xuan seemed to be completely immersed in his cultivation, oblivious to Ding Hong's fist. He stood perfectly still on the spot, allowing the rampaging torrent to drown him.

Even though the Merchant Luo Fist was created by a merchant, it didn't feel crass or subservient. Instead, there was a dominance that threatened to crush everything that stood in its path.

Being in the midst of his breakthrough, Zhang Xuan was completely defenseless. If that fist were to land on Zhang Xuan, he would definitely die on the spot.

Boom!

A loud explosion sounded. A cloud of dust flew into the air, and small rock fragments shot into the surroundings. In an instant, the young man's figure had completely disappeared from sight.

"Zhang shi..."

'Gongzi' narrowed his eyes, and he nearly fell to the ground.

Zhang Xuan's turning of the tables time after time during a dire situation had already built an infallible image within him. Thus, 'gongzi' thought that, like many times before, Zhang Xuan would do the same this time... Yet, the other party didn't do anything at all. On top of it, he was struck in the midst of his cultivation, when he was completely defenseless!

Under that immense might of the blow, could he be dead already?

After all, that was a Transcendent Mortal expert using his full might! Even a fellow Transcendent Mortal expert would find it hard to withstand the attack, lest be said, a Zhizun realm pinnacle cultivator!

"It's over..."

Wei Yuqing and Gu Mu also saw the sight before them turning dark.

They were both Zhizun realm pinnacle cultivators, and putting themselves in the other party's situation, they could see themselves being completely crushed into bits.

They thought that a miracle would happen once more. After all, the young man below had defied common sense too many times... No one could have imagined that he would be killed just like that...

"That's impossible... Zhang Xuan, you can't die!"

Mo Yu's face paled, and her eyes reddened.

Zhang Xuan, aren't you going to save Lu Chong? How can you die here?

If you really die here, how can you face your students who have entrusted themselves to you...

You can't fall here! You mustn't!

"Haha! Attempting a breakthrough on the spot? Such a foolish notion! You deserve to die..."

Ding Hong also didn't expect his attack to work, and he howled furiously in delight.

However, at the very next moment, a familiar voice echoed amidst the dust.

"Thank you for helping me break through my bottleneck!"

Boom!

A powerful aura abruptly surged, and as though a flood dragon, it ascended into the skies, shaking the heavens.

Half-Transcension realm reached!

Chapter 443: Strength of a Hundred Thousand Ding

"What?"

Narrowing his eyes, Ding Hong saw the dust clearing, and a figure was slowly walking toward him.

Who else could it be if not Zhang Xuan!

At this current moment, Zhang Xuan was still in perfect condition, and there wasn't even a speck of dust on his clothes. It was as if the target of the previous attack wasn't him.

But what stood out the most was the overwhelming aura he was exuding. Ferocious might exuded from every single point of his body; he was clearly many times stronger than before.

"Yo-you..."

Ding Hong's body froze.

He had launched an attack with his full might, and he was certain that the attack landed on the other party. Yet, not only did Ding Hong fail to kill him, the other party even managed to achieve a breakthrough and reach Half-Transcension. This... This can't be real!

As for 'gongzi' and the others who thought that Zhang Xuan was doomed this time, they were completely dumbstruck.

Was he a cockroach?

How could he be fine after being punched like that?

"So what if you've reached Half-Transcension? Die!"

With eyes reddened with frenzy, Ding Hong clenched his teeth, flicked his wrist, and whipped out a sword. Then, he charged straight toward Zhang Xuan.

The reason why he didn't use a weapon before wasn't because he was intentionally going easy on Zhang Xuan, but rather, he didn't think that there was any use for it.

However, given that the other party had reached Half-Transcension realm and considering his incredible means, if he didn't give it everything he had, he would really die here.

Huala!

The cold gleam of the sword shone across the entire Heaven's Altar.

Ding Hong had immersed himself within swordsmanship for more than a hundred years, and he had already reached an

incredibly high mastery in the art. With this slash, white sword qi gushed out from his sword, reaching a distance of more than several dozen meters, making it difficult for anyone to approach him.

"It's Sword Intent!"

Everyone's faces froze.

Those who comprehended Weapon Intent had achieved an extremely profound level of understanding of weapons, to the point that their weapon felt no different from an extension of their hands.

This was an abstract state, and it took countless years of hard work before one could achieve it. However, the benefits it brought were massive as well. One who had comprehended Sword Intent could be said to be invincible among those of the same cultivation realm.

"Not only has he comprehend Sword Intent, he's even advanced rather far in it!"

Jin Conghai frowned. "Seems like it's not possible for Zhang Shi to achieve victory!"

If Ding Hong had used Sword Intent earlier on, Zhang Xuan might have lost immediately. Even though Zhang Xuan had managed to reach Half-Transcension, the situation was still against

his odds.

Sword Intent was a representation of one's level of achievement in swordsmanship, and the strikes of those who have reached this level tended to be swifter and sharper.

This Zhang Shi wasn't even twenty yet, and on top of that, he was a spear user. His understanding of the sword was probably far inferior to the other party. It would be nigh impossible for him to achieve victory.

'Gongzi', Wei Yuqing, and the others didn't speak, but every single one of them had a grim expression on their faces. Clearly, they shared the same thoughts as well.

A Transcendent Mortal who had comprehended Sword Intent was a truly terrifying force to reckon with. Even Jin Conghai would face some trouble with him.

Huala!

A sword qi flew across the air, leaving a deep tear on the ground.

Different from the anxious crowd, Zhang Xuan didn't seem flustered in the least. He smiled lightly and stepped forward.

His figure faded, and in the blink of an eye, he had already advanced four to five meters.

It was as though he could foresee the future. His body moved from the left to the right, and the sharp sword qi simply slid past his skin, without leaving a single cut on him.

At that moment, Zhang Xuan seemed as though an agile fish. Even though the sword qi before him was spread widely like a net, he was still able to easily find an opening and slide through.

"Half-Transcension... is indeed powerful!"

Feeling the immense strength surging through his body, Zhang Xuan thought.

Under normal circumstances, it would have been impossible for him to reach Half-Transcension.

Hall Master Xie Jiuchen had gathered a huge collection of Zhizun realm manual under his request, but very few of them detailed the method to breaking through to Half-Transcension. As such, after compilation, a Half-Transcension Heaven's Path Divine Art couldn't be formed.

This was precisely the reason why Zhang Xuan stopped right after he had reached Zhizun realm pinnacle.

However, the energy within the Crimson Flame Lotus Seed far exceeded his expectations. He wanted to stop, but the violent nature of the energy prevented him from doing so. Thus, he was

forced to continue striving for Half-Transcension.

Under normal circumstances, without a compiled Heaven's Path Divine Art, it would be hard for him to achieve a breakthrough. It could potentially lead to his cultivation going berserk, and in the worst case scenario, he might even sustain severe internal injuries.

The situation back then was precarious, and Zhang Xuan nearly lost control of the rampaging energy within it.

And at that crucial moment, Ding Hong made a move.

The strong external force that struck the Zhang Xuan who was on the verge of exploding suppressed the rampaging energy within him. Not only was he fine from the collision of energy, he was even able to make use of this as an impetus to advance his cultivation.

If Ding Hong hadn't made a move, Zhang Xuan might have been severely injured from the rampaging energy of the Crimson Flame Lotus Seed.

Even though the other party had intended to kill him, he ended up doing him a big favor instead.

Thus, Zhang Xuan's 'thanks' before was truly earnest.

But of course, if Ding Hong were to learn of it, he might have died out of anger.

What the heck was this!

If only I knew earlier, I wouldn't have been so anxious to strike...

...

The thought disappeared as soon as it appeared.

Entering the sea of sword qi created by the other party, Zhang Xuan's fist struck out.

At the same moment, lines of insight flowed within his eyes.

Eye of Insight.

His Eye of Insight could peer into the flaws of a cultivator a small realm above that of his cultivation.

Ding Hong was a Transcendent Mortal Prolonged Longevity realm primary stage expert, and thus, under the flowing lines of insight, all of the flaws of his movements and cultivation appeared in Zhang Xuan's sight.

Boom!

The Heaven's Path Fist Art, augmented by overwhelming zhenqi,

shot straight to the center of the sword qi.

"Damn it!"

Ding Hong didn't expect the other party to slide through the sea of sword qi that he had produced and to even throw a fist straight at him. His face paled, and roaring furiously, he twisted his sword and blocked the fist with the body of his sword.

Ding!

The fist landed on the sword, and a deafening metallic sound reverberated in the air from the collision. Ding Hong couldn't help but retreat two steps back.

"Hundred thousand ding? The strength of a 1-dan Prolonged Longevity realm cultivator?"

Ding Hong's face paled.

Zhizun realm was known as the Ten Thousand Ding realm, and it was representative of the level that a cultivator's strength finally exceeded 10,000 ding.

After that, every small cultivation realm would add an additional ten thousand ding of strength.

Thus, a normal Zhizun realm pinnacle would possess a strength

of 40,000 ding.

As for Transcendent Mortals, even though they had reached a level of existence and could draw energy from the heavens to augment themselves, there was a limit to their might as well.

At 1-dan Prolonged Longevity realm, the limit of one's strength was 100,000 ding.

Thus, it was also termed the Hundred Thousand Ding realm.

If Ten Thousand Ding represented Zhizun, then Hundred Thousand Ding represented Transcendent Mortal.

The fellow before him was clearly just a Half-Transcension cultivator... How in the world did he manage to achieve a strength of a hundred thousand ding?

Initially, Ding Hong had been thinking that even though the other party had achieved a breakthrough, he would surely be unable to match up to him in terms of might. However, after taking a blow, he realized that he had lost this advantage.

"So what if your strength has reached 100,000 ding? Do you think that your fist art can defeat my Sword Intent? Don't even dream of it!"

Ding Hong clenched his teeth tightly.

Huala!

His sword began dancing about, and Sword Intent surged out as though a burst of light. In the blink of an eye, it wrapped itself around him, forming a flowing barrier.

"Shameless!"

Upon seeing the move, 'gongzi' harrumphed

"He's indeed shameless!"

Jin Conghai nodded. "Making use of Sword Intent as a defensive measure... To think that a Transcendent Mortal expert would be forced by a Half-Transcension to take defensive maneuvers!"

Ding Hong seemed to have given up on offense, choosing to focus entirely on defense instead.

The Sword Intent had an incomparably sharp nature, and it covered the area around him entirely. No matter how powerful Zhang Xuan's fist was, it was impossible for him to strike through the wall of sword qi.

In other words, Ding Hong was afraid of Zhang Xuan.

He knew that it was impossible for him to kill the other party, so

he chose to fight defensively instead.

Transcendent Mortals were respected even in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. Yet, at this moment, one was being forced into a corner by a Half-Transcension cultivator. Even though they were witnessing this sight personally, they still felt faint-headed.

"But even though other party had chosen to focus on defense... Isn't Zhang shi helpless before it as well?" Wei Yuqing asked.

"Indeed, there's nothing he can do about it. The Sword Intent has covered his body entirely, and there are no openings to be exploited here. Unless Zhang shi has comprehended Sword Intent as well, otherwise it'll be extremely difficult for him to break through Ding Hong's defense!" Jin Conghai replied.

Within the flowing Sword Intent was incomparably sharp sword qi. No matter how tough one's fist was, it was still made of flesh and blood. How could it face sword qi which was publicly acknowledged for its sharpness?

"Zhang Xuan, you might be formidable, but there's nothing you can do about me now! Since Ding Mu is already dead, why don't we drop this matter?"

Having blocked the other party's attack, Ding Hong heaved a sigh of relief. He turned to the young man not too far away and said.

The other party had killed his most beloved and valued progeny.

Thus, he wanted to destroy the other party and restore prestige to the Ding Clan. Yet, at this very moment, he realized that not only was he unable to defeat the other party, he might even die from the other party's assault. After a moment of hesitation, he decided to take a step back.

Ding Mu was already dead, and he had many other progenies. As long as he survived, the Ding Clan could still start anew.

"There's nothing I can about you?" Zhang Xuan shook his head. "You're overestimating yourself!"

"My Sword Intent is flowing around my entire body; do you really think that your fist can break through it?"

Ding Hong sneered coldly. "It's impossible unless you comprehended Sword Intent and face my Sword Intent face on... But do you think that it's possible?"

You must be joking!

To comprehend Sword Intent, he had traveled across and lived in all kinds of barren and desolate lands for more than thirty years before he succeeded.

On the other hand, that fellow wasn't even twenty yet. Even if he started cultivating from his mother's womb, how much could he have comprehended about swordsmanship?

Furthermore, the other party had executed a spear art previously. Judging from his sharp and forceful movements, he clearly possessed some aptitude in it.

Even though there was no limit to the Weapon Intent one could cultivate, there was a limit to a human's talent and energy.

It was already incredible for him to bring his spear art to that height. To be capable of utilizing Sword Intent on top of that... Was it even possible?

"Sword Intent? That's indeed not quite possible!"

Knowing the other party's thoughts, Zhang Xuan chuckled lightly. With a flick of his wrist, a sword appeared in his hands.

"Sword Intent is too mediocre for me!"

As Zhang Xuan spoke, he slowly drew his sword.

Weng! Weng! Weng!

Before the sword was fully drawn, the swords by the waists of the swordsmen amidst the crowd began buzzing. It was as though they were paying respect to their emperor.

"Call of the Myriad Swords, Roar of the Dragons... Thi-this... the realm beyond that of Sword Intent... Sword Heart?"

Ding Hong's vision turned dark.

Chapter 444: Slaying a Transcendent Mortal

Sword Heart was the state of driving one's sword with one's heart, controlling it with one's intentions. Every move made in this state could be considered as a sword art in itself.

In contrast with it, Sword Intent was extremely mediocre and immature.

It was like the difference between a weed and a towering tree.

Ding Hong thought that with his Sword Intent, even if he couldn't kill the other party, he could at least force a draw and step down from there. Yet, never in his dreams did he expect that everything he did was only a farce to the other party... The other party's sword mastery was far above his own, reaching the level of Sword Heart!

That was a realm that countless Transcendent Mortal dreamt of and dedicated their lives to, only to never reach it in their lifetime. Yet, a fellow who wasn't even twenty yet and who had just barely reached Half-Transcension actually managed to comprehend it...

When he mocked the other party for being unable to fly, the other party yelled and the Steelback Winged Dragon immediately fell from the sky.

When he mocked the other party for being too weak to hurt

him... in the blink of an eye, the other party broke through to Half-Transcension.

When he mocked the other party for his incapability to wield Sword Intent, the other party topped him with the higher realm Sword Heart...

Brother, can you at least tell me what you aren't capable of? At the very least, I can prepare myself. Do you know how terrifying it is...

Ding Hong felt his confidence crumbling.

"You're right, it's indeed Sword Heart!"

Chuckling softly, Zhang Xuan finally drew his sword completely.

His sword came from the Lin Clan, and it was only at Phantom intermediate-tier. At the same time, it wasn't too sharp either. Yet, it had an indomitable presence.

Sword qi flowed around its edge. With a slight flick of Zhang Xuan's wrist, the air seemed to have been torn to shreds.

Huala!

Under normal circumstances, as long as one's strength didn't exceed him by too much, Ding Hong's Sword Intent barrier would

be hard to break. Yet, for some reason, as soon as the blunt-looking sword came into contact with it, the barrier immediately dissipated without the slightest resistance.

Puhe!

A sword qi flew across, severing Ding Hong's left arm. It was so sharp that not even blood flowed out of his wound.

The sword qi emanated from a swordmaster who had comprehended Sword Heart was indomitable. On top of that, Zhang Xuan's strength wasn't inferior to him as well. Even though the other party was a Transcendent Mortal expert, he wasn't able to withstand the attack.

"Escape!"

Knowing that he would surely die if he remained here, Ding Hong's face paled. He immediately turned around and fled.

He had stepped in ferociously back then, but he ended up escaping with his tail between his legs.

No one expected for the legendary old ancestor of Xuanyuan Kingdom, a Transcendent Mortal expert, to meet with such an ending. It was truly beyond expectations.

"Incredible!"

"To achieve a breakthrough at that crucial moment and slay a Transcendent Mortal, how valiant! This is how a man should act!"

"From today on, Zhang shi shall be my idol. Don't even try to steal him from me!"

"This is what a true genius is. Compared to him, Ding Mu was nothing at all."

...

The eyes of the spectating youngsters burned with passion.

When Zhang Xuan came alone to challenge the incumbent crown prince, everyone thought that he was being too arrogant and they felt intense loathing toward him. But after undergoing his teachings via the Impartation of Heaven's Will and becoming his half-students, their feelings for him gradually changed into gratitude.

And at this moment, looking at him sending even the old ancestor of Xuanyuan Kingdom fleeing, it evolved into veneration.

A person single-handedly standing against an entire country!

That is how a man should be!

"You all might not know, but I heard that the reason why Zhang shi came after Ding Mu is because the latter had killed his student!"

"How did you know?"

"My cousin, Zhou Jin, is an Imperial Beast Tamer serving the crown prince. He blurted the matter out when he was drunk!"

"Standing up against an entire country alone to avenge his student, even going to the extent of standing against a Transcendent Mortal?"

"On top of that, when he came, he wasn't that strong yet. How much courage must it have taken to make this move..."

"With such a teacher, even if I were to die now... it would be worth it!"

...

Amidst the crowd, some of the well-informed ones spoke of the matter from start to the end. The eyes of the listeners gradually reddened, and they clenched their fists tight.

The greatest fortune that a cultivator could encounter was a good teacher.

Not only was Zhang shi strong and capable at teaching, more

importantly, he cared for his students. He stood up against an entire Conferred Kingdom alone just for his student. With such sentiments, he was more than worthy of being addressed as a 'teacher'.

...

While everyone was overwhelmed with agitation, on the Heaven's Altar, Zhang Xuan's eyes narrowed as he noticed Ding Hong escaping.

"Hmph, do you think that you can get away?"

Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up, and exerting force on his feet, he immediately dashed forward.

After the matter with Ding Mu, he realized the danger of sparing one's enemies. Since he had already fallen out with the other party, he had to clear them out cleanly. Otherwise, the one who would be threatened would be him.

If not for his compassion back then, Lu Chong wouldn't have been sacrificed.

Thus, he was determined to leave no more threats behind.

"Don't even try!"

With a flick of his wrist, Zhang Xuan's sword sliced down.

A sword qi immediately tore through a hundred meters of space, headed straight for the escaping Ding Hong.

After reaching Half-Transcension, Zhang Xuan had already gained a certain level of control over the environment. In the past, the range of his sword qi was limited to only a dozen meters. However, with his enhanced degree of control and enhanced zhenqi, a hundred meters was no longer a problem.

Huala!

The sword qi struck the other party's back, tearing open a massive, glaring wound in an instant.

Due to the long distance, the sword qi had dissipated significantly. Otherwise, it would have been more than sufficient to slice Ding Hong into two.

"Blood Tribute!"

Feeling the sharp pain on his back, Ding Hong was alarmed. He knew that it wasn't easy for the other party to kill him due to the long distance, but if he were to be struck any more of that sword qi, he would surely die. Thus, gritting his teeth, Ding Hong burned his life force and his speed abruptly increased by a single fold.

Like the Blood Tribute that Ding Mu used back then came from

him, even though it allowed him to utilize strength and speed beyond his current cultivation, it had a time limit. After the duration, one's cultivation would automatically fall.

It was a technique that hurt oneself as much as it hurt one's opponent.

It was a move that wouldn't be used unless the situation truly called for it. Usually, Ding Hong would surely go after the other party if he activated the Blood Tribute to avenge his great grandson... But this time, he was truly frightened by the other party.

Every time that fellow looked as though he were going to lose, he would always make a shocking comeback.

He was afraid of the means that the other party would continue pulling out if he chose to continue to fight. If so, once the Blood Tribute duration ran out, he wouldn't be able to even escape.

Sou!

With his hastened speed, Ding Hong disappeared amidst the labyrinth-like infrastructures of the capital.

"Damn it!"

Seeing the other party vanish into the shadows, Zhang Xuan clenched his fists tightly.

Even though he had managed to reach Half-Transcension, he had suffered quite a few traumas in the midst of doing so.

On top of that, he had used the Heaven's Path Movement Art too many times previously, and he was already reaching his limit now. If he were to attempt to catch up, he might collapse before he could catch up with the other party.

On the other hand, he had never learned any other movement arts before. Furthermore, his cultivation was beneath that of Ding Hong, so it would be difficult for him to catch up.

"There's no need to feel pity over this. That fellow has lost his arm, and on top of that, he even used the Blood Tribute. Even if he manages to get away with his life, his cultivation would definitely plummet.

"Based on my estimations, it'll be hard for him to even sustain his cultivation as a Half-Transcension. Thus, he's not a threat anymore!"

Zhang Xuan was just thinking whether he should make use of these soldiers to search through the entire city to cut off the weed at its root when a voice echoed.

Turning around, he saw a youth walking toward him with a bright grin on his face.

He was around the same age of Zhao Ya, but his body seemed a little weak. His black eyes were gleaming with spirit, and his skin was smooth. All in all, he had an exquisite appearance.

"A woman?"

Zhang Xuan frowned.

Even though the other party was dressed in the clothes of a man, it wasn't sufficient to deceive Zhang Xuan's Eye of Insight.

This was an ability that only a 6-star master teacher had the chance to comprehend. It could even see through the hidden flaws of a cultivator, lest to say, a cross-dresser.

"I am Zhao Feiwu, and I came from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. Nice to meet you, Zhang shi!"

The youth didn't know that her identity had been exposed, and she clasped her fists with a carefree smile.

This youth was the 'gongzi' from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. Just that, no one could have expected that 'he' was actually a she.

"Envoy, thank you for your help!"

Upon hearing that the other party came from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, Zhang Xuan immediately understood the

situation.

That alliance decree that declared Ding Mu's inauguration as illegitimate probably came from this person.

Otherwise, he couldn't think of anyone else.

"Xuanyuan Kingdom has acted on their own whim, conducting an inauguration ceremony without reporting the matter to the alliance. I am just dealing with this matter as per the rules!"

'Gongzi' Zhao Feiwu smiled admiringly at the young man before her. "Speaking of thanks, I should be the one thanking you instead. It's due to your treatment method that I was able to recover. Otherwise, I would still be lying on the bed waiting for my death now!"

"Treatment method?"

Zhang Xuan was stumped.

"It was the final question that Zhang Shi solved in your alias as Liu Cheng on the Wall of Dilemma in the Tianwu Kingdom Physician Guild. I was afflicted with the illness, and my father had consulted countless physicians about the matter but they were all at a loss. It's only because of you that I was able to make a full recovery!" Zhao Feiwu said.

The noble 'gongzi' who was cross-dressing as a male was the

second princess of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance who lay sickly on her bed just a few days ago.

Upon knowing that the one who provided the treatment method was a physician named 'Liu Cheng' from a Tier 1 Kingdom, she immediately rushed over along with her subordinate, Jin Conghai.

While passing through Xuanyuan Kingdom, Jin Conghai received a message from Gu Mu and headed over to the Poison Hall. Over there, the two of them met Sun Qiang, and upon learning that Liu Cheng was Zhang Xuan, they chose to head over to Xuanyuan Royal City to assist him.

Otherwise, given how the both of them were unrelated, there was no reason for Zhao Feiwu to favor a 2-star master teacher over a vassal Conferred Kingdom, or even harboring the thought of sending Jin Conghai over to save him?

"Innate Muscular Deficiency?"

Zhang Xuan also recalled the matter.

Back then, he only solved the problem thinking that it was a necessity for him to become a physician. He didn't expect to save a person due to that.

Furthermore, from the looks of it, this lady seemed to have a powerful background.

"Exactly!" Zhao Feiwu nodded.

"My treatment method has saved you, but you have already returned the favor by helping me out of this matter. So, we're on equal footing now!" Zhang Xuan clasped his fist.

Zhang Xuan didn't want to owe a debt to anyone as this could bring about a karmic cycle.

Since he had helped the person before, in a sense, the other party's actions could be considered as returning the favor. Thus, neither of them owed anything to the other anymore.

"Equal footing?"

Zhao Feiwu was taken aback.

Despite learning that she was the envoy from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, and on top of that, it was clear that she was expressing goodwill toward him, he actually shrugged it off, not demanding anything at all. He was truly a peculiar person.

There were very few people who could resist this kind of opportunity.

However, Zhao Feiwu quickly recovered and smiled, "Let's do that then! However... you've killed the emperor of a Conferred Kingdom and driven away his old ancestor. How should we settle this matter? If we don't resolve this matter properly, it could cause

a huge pandemonium."

To think that the royal family of a Conferred Kingdom could be reduced to such a state; the inaugurating emperor dying and the old ancestor fleeing in a fluster. If other kingdoms were to learn of it, they would definitely make use of this opening.

"This..."

Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He was too preoccupied with avenging Lu Chong that he failed to consider this matter.

The current circumstances were indeed dire for Xuanyuan Kingdom. If this matter wasn't resolved properly, it would be a matter of time before the entire kingdom falls into chaos.

"Actually, I have an idea in mind."

Seeing the other party's hesitation, Zhao Feiwu's eyes twinkled and she smiled.

"Oh?"

"Since you were the one who destroyed the royal family, I believe that no one would dare to raise any objections if you became the new emperor. This way, I'll be able to report the matter to my

superiors as well," Zhao Feiwu suggested.

The main reason why she had spoken her previous words wasn't to put Zhang Xuan in a spot but to bring up this suggestion.

In truth, she had already considered this outcome. Otherwise, she wouldn't have helped Zhang Xuan.

The person before her was able to stand up against an entire kingdom on his own. If he were to become the emperor, he would surely be able to bring the kingdom to greater heights.

At the same time, she could return the favor as well. Thus, in her opinion, this was a win-win situation.

"Becoming the emperor?"

Zhang Xuan shook his head. "I'll pass on that."

He had to reach 9-star master teacher before thirty to live on. The thought of staying here as the emperor had never crossed his mind.

"This..."

Not expecting to be rejected, Zhao Feiwu was stunned.

An emperor wielded absolute authority over the territory he governed; it was a dream for countless people. Yet, the other party turned her down without any hesitation...

"However, it's indeed my fault that Xuanyuan Kingdom was reduced to its current state. Even though I'm reluctant to become the emperor, why don't I nominate another candidate?" Zhang Xuan said, after a moment of hesitation.

But no matter what, a country mustn't go a day without an emperor or else it would lead to social instability and various other problems. This wasn't what Zhang Xuan hoped to see.

"Oh?"

Not expecting Zhang Xuan to reject it and nominate another candidate instead, Zhao Feiwu stared at him with an intrigued expression, "Nominating another emperor? May I know who it is? Don't tell me that you're going to nominate Sun Qiang!"

If it was Sun Qiang, she would probably burst into tears on the spot.

That fellow was weak, yet he was exceptionally arrogant and boastful. More importantly, the words 'wise' and 'astute' were in a whole different world from him. If he were to become the emperor, Xuanyuan Kingdom might fall into greater ruins.

"Sun Qiang? How can that be? There's no way such a great talent

should be placed in such a humble position!" Zhang Xuan shook his head.

Sun Qiang was his butler, and he was going to venture out into the larger world alongside him. How could he leave the other party behind in such a shabby location?

"... Cough cough!"

Zhao Feiwu choked on her own saliva.

Truly, the attitude of the servant reflected the personality of the master.

At the start, she thought that Sun Qiang's boastful nature was an individual problem. However, after looking at Zhang Xuan, she realized that it was impossible for him not to be boastful with such a young master...

An ignorant Pixue realm cultivator becoming the emperor of a Conferred Kingdom, and you think that it's a waste of his talents... Can we still talk properly?

Suppressing the stifling sensation in her chest, Zhao Feiwu asked, "Then who are you nominating?"

"Her..."

Zhang Xuan smiled as he beckoned to the skies, "Mo Yu, come down!"

Roar!

The Steelfang Howling Firmament Beast in the skies howled furiously and swooped down. Mo Yu immediately rushed up to Zhang Xuan with reddened eyes, wanting to dive into his embrace. However, she hesitated and eventually decided against it.

He had truly left her worried just now.

However, she was aware that the other party harbored no feelings toward her. If she were to dive into the other party's embrace, that would truly be awkward.

"Her?"

Not expecting the candidate that Zhang Xuan was going to nominate to be a lady, Zhao Feiwu was perplexed.

"Indeed, I want her to become the first empress of Xuanyuan Kingdom. I wonder if it's acceptable?" Zhang Xuan chuckled.

"Empress? Xuanyuan Kingdom's empress?"

Upon hearing Zhang Xuan's words, Mo Yu's body began trembling uncontrollably.

Chapter 445: Raising Mo Yu's Cultivation

Tianwu Kingdom's Emperor, Mo Tianxue, had always been grooming his daughter to become the empress of the kingdom. Thus, even though Mo Yu was still young, she was already adept in the process of governing a country.

In that sense, she would become a much better ruler for Xuanyuan Kingdom than him.

"Her?"

Zhao Feiwu was dumbstruck. She couldn't help but refute, "Her cultivation seems to have only reached Zongshi realm..."

Xuanyuan Kingdom was a land filled with Zhizun realm cultivators. A Zongshi realm cultivator simply wasn't strong enough to stabilize the lands.

"Her cultivation is indeed a little too weak. However, to be able to possess this kind of strength at her age, she could already be considered as a top-notch genius. As long as she has sufficient cultivation resources in the future, it won't be too difficult for her to gain sufficient strength to become a powerful ruler in the future!"

Despite coming from a Tier 1 Kingdom, Mo Yu still managed to reach a high level of cultivation at her age. Once the resources of Xuanyuan Kingdom were channeled toward her, her cultivation would surely soar swiftly. It wouldn't be a dream for her to reach

Zhizun realm pinnacle or even Half-Transcension in the future.

"I believe in her talents as well, but what about the present state? The people's hearts are currently in turmoil, and if there isn't a sufficiently strong presence to hold things together, I fear that a calamity may occur!"

Zhao Feiwu was speechless to see how lightly Zhang Xuan was taking this matter.

Not everyone could become the ruler of a country. The primary requisite for it was for one to possess top-notch cultivation. Otherwise, who would be willing to listen to a weakling?

Without sufficient strength, even if Mo Yu were to ascend to the throne with the backing by the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, she might very well be assassinated by her rivals.

After all, the seat of an emperor of a Conferred Kingdom was an incredibly prestigious one. There were countless people who had their eyes set on this position.

Electing a weak emperor would only cause chaos and strife, and this would push the country straight toward the flames of destruction.

"Is that so..." Knowing that his thoughts lacked depth, Zhang Xuan scratched his head in embarrassment. Thus, he turned to Mo Yu and asked, "Do you wish to reach Zhizun realm pinnacle?"

"Of course I do!"

Even though Mo Yu didn't know the significance behind Zhang Xuan's words, she still nodded her head.

Who didn't wish to become stronger?

But could Zhizun realm pinnacle be that easily achieved?

Of the countless cultivators in the world, probably not even one out of ten thousand was able to reach that legendary realm. The difficulty of the matter was unimaginable.

Zhao Feiwu felt perplexed when she heard Zhang Xuan's words.

What is this fellow up to this time?

"Good. Open your mouth then!"

Ignoring the onlookers' bewilderment, Zhang Xuan flicked his finger.

Before Mo Yu could react, a lotus seed was shot into her mouth.

It immediately melted into immense, violent energy which seeped into her meridians in an instant. However, her cultivation

was still far too weak for her to bear such immense energy, and she immediately swelled up, nearly exploding into shreds.

"Sit down!" Zhang Xuan immediately commanded.

"Yes!"

Not daring to hesitate, Mo Yu hurriedly sat down. Following which, she felt a huge hand being placed on the top of her head.

Boom!

Dense, pure zhenqi seeped down her body, controlling the rampaging energy of the lotus seed. It guided the rampaging energy in a unique circulation pathway around her body.

Kacha! Kacha! Kacha!

A series of popping sounds echoed, and Mo Yu felt her body abruptly lightened. The bottlenecks which had kept her out previously was broken through in an instant.

Zongshi realm intermediate stage!

Zongshi realm advanced stage!

Zongshi realm pinnacle!

Half-Zhizun!

...

Mo Yu's aura grew stronger at a pace visible to the eye.

"This, this..."

Zhao Feiwu's eyeballs were about to pop out of her head.

She'd thought that this fellow was up to something, and she was right!

Making someone achieve consecutive breakthroughs in the blink of an eye?

Even the most capable 4-star pinnacle master teacher in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance was incapable of such a feat!

You... Are you still human?

It was no wonder that Sun Qiang stared at her with such disdain back then. Upon seeing Zhang Xuan's means, she realized that there was a much larger world outside that of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance.

"To induce a breakthrough in another so easily..."

Jin Conghai also felt a dryness at the back of his throat.

He was a Transcendent Mortal expert, but he was incapable of such feat, and he had never seen anyone achieving such a feat either. Yet, the fellow before him accomplished it so easily, as though it was a walk in the park...

I would like to know if there's anything you are incapable of.

When did such a ridiculous monster appear in Tianwu Kingdom? This is way too frightening...

Pavilion Master Luo Qianhong's mouth was also twitching violently from fear. If not for his strong mental fortitude, he might have turned insane on the spot.

As a master teacher, he understood clearly how difficult it was to achieve that feat.

To be able to achieve multiple breakthrough himself, Zhang Xuan could be considered as a genius. However... To do the same for others as well, that was already surpassing the realm of a mere genius.

"This is... Cultivation Impartation?"

A phrase surfaced in Luo Qianhong's mind amidst his trembling.

It was said that formidable master teachers could design a cultivation technique based on their student's physique and use their own zhenqi to impart energy into the latter to raise their cultivation.

But to do so, there were several conditions that had to be fulfilled.

Firstly, one had to be a 6-star master teacher. Secondly, one had to have absolute understanding of the student, be it the state of their meridians, their body's limit, and innumerable other factors. Lastly, the cultivation technique one designed must be completely compatible with the other party's physique...

There mustn't be the slightest lapse in any of the three conditions, or else the other party's meridians could rupture, thus resulting in death. Yet, this fellow did it so easily without the slightest preparation. On top of that, there didn't seem to be any side effects at all...

Are you really a 2-star master teacher?

Are you sure you are under twenty?

In an instant, Luo Qianhong felt that his time spent studying and understanding the master teacher occupation had been for naught. In the end, despite his efforts, he didn't seem to have achieved

anything at all...

"To raise someone's cultivation so easily... My heavens, can anyone tell me this isn't a dream?"

"Idol, he's truly my idol. I want to acknowledge him as my teacher!"

"Incredible! This is the means of a god..."

...

The soldiers who saw this sight were dumbfounded as well.

They had seen geniuses, but they had never seen such a talented genius.

In fact, the word 'genius' seemed like a gross underestimation.

Kacha! Kacha! Kacha!

Amidst everyone's shocked gazes, Mo Yu's aura continued rising rapidly. Eventually, when it slowed down and came to a stop, Mo Yu opened her eyes and a sharp glint reflected from within.

Zhizun realm pinnacle, achieved!

She had been cultivating ever since she was six, and it took her seventeen years for her to reach Zongshi realm. She thought that it would take at least twenty years before Zhizun realm would be in her reach.

Never had she ever thought that she would succeed in just a few breaths.

This rate of progression was like a dream to her.

"Thank you, Zhang shi!"

Knowing that it was impossible for her to succeed without the help of the person before her, Mo Yu stood up and bowed earnestly.

Her address also changed from Zhang Xuan to Zhang shi.

Initially, she was still harboring thoughts of competing with this young man, hoping to win the other party's admiration one day.

But at this moment, she realized that there was a world of a difference between the two of them, and this gap would only continue growing larger. It would be impossible for her to catch up with the other party.

Putting aside competing and winning his admiration, she probably wasn't even qualified to become the other party's student. In the end, they were just passers-by in this vast world.

"It's no problem at all!"

Oblivious to her thoughts, Zhang Xuan shook his hands. Then, turning to gongzi, he asked, "Is it fine now?"

After a moment of hesitation, Zhao Feiwu said, "She has reached Zhizun realm pinnacle so she does have the qualifications to become the emperor now. However... it'll take more than that to win everyone's trust..."

While a Zhizun realm pinnacle cultivator was indeed powerful in Xuanyuan Kingdom, there were many others of the same cultivation realm here as well. Just this by itself wouldn't be sufficient for Mo Yu to stabilize the entire country. At the very least, she would require the strength of a Half-Transcension to do so.

After all, those who were listed in the Green Leaf Board had all reached this realm. Zhizun realm pinnacle was just sufficient for one to be listed in the Young Leaf Board.

"That... Alright then!"

Rubbing his hands, Zhang Xuan turned to the trembling Steelback Winged Dragon and said, "Acknowledge Mo Yu as your master, and from today on, protect her and obey all of her commands!"

"Ah?"

Hearing these words, everyone was dumbfounded.

Even Mo Yu and Zhao Feiwu were perplexed.

Are you speaking nonsense?

This fellow was the guardian beast of the Xuanyuan royal family! On top of that, it was a proud bearer of the Dragon Bloodline. For it to submit to Mo Yu on the first meeting...

How was that possible?

Roar!

Just when everyone thought this massive fellow wouldn't agree to it, the Steelback Winged Dragon smiled in delight and hurriedly climbed over. It began rubbing its massive head on Mo Yu in an attempt to fawn on her.

"The heck..."

"This... Isn't it being way too shameless?"

Everyone's body trembled violently and they nearly spat out blood.

As a proud bearer of the Dragon Bloodline, the Steelback Winged Dragon was usually condescending toward humans. Yet, it fell from the sky with a call from Zhang Xuan and abandoned its owner. Then, it even went on to obey every single command from him...

Can you at least possess some dragon pride?

You make yourself seem as though you're no different from a pug, how can a powerful savage beast like you act so shamelessly!

"This fellow seems to wield a strength that simply leave others speechless..." Grand Elder Wei Yuqing who had just climbed down from the back of the savage beast sighed.

Somehow, this fellow was able to accomplish what others deemed impossible easily. Sometimes, one couldn't help but wonder if he was a high-ranked master teacher in disguise.

"Now that the matter with the kingdom is settled, it's time for me to deal with the Master Teacher Pavilion!"

Zhang Xuan turned around to look at Luo Qianhong with a composed look.

For a Master Teacher Pavilion to cover up Ding Mu's villainy against one of their own members, it was about time to deal with it.

On top of that, if Zhang Xuan didn't resolve this matter cleanly, his action of making a move against a 3-star master teacher would become a permanent blemish on his records. If so, it would be difficult for him to take the subsequent master teacher examinations.

After all, master teachers prided themselves on their morals.

For a master teacher to disregard the clear hierarchy and defy a higher ranked master teacher, no one would be willing to see him climb through the ranks.

"Are you certain that... you want to crash the Master Teacher Pavilion?" Zhao Feiwu asked worriedly.

If Pavilion Crashing only consisted of fighting against the master teachers in the Master Teacher Pavilion, there would be nothing for Zhang Xuan to fear. After all, he was someone who could even slay a Transcendent Mortal. Even the strongest master teacher, Pavilion Master Luo Qianhong, was only a Half-Transcension. There was nothing for Zhang Xuan to fear from them.

"Pavilion Crashing is equivalent to challenging all of the master teachers that have gone through Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher Pavilion ever since its inception. Even though the location of this Master Teacher Pavilion is remote, it has several thousand years of history behind it. Based on the records, a 5-star master teacher and three 4-star master teachers once emerged from here..."

Zhao Feiwu clenched her fists tightly, "Even though they are already dead, their lingering wills are imprinted within the Master Teacher Pavilion. To crash it means to stand against them as well. Are you sure you don't want to reconsider the matter?"

If Pavilion Crashing only meant challenging the incumbent master teachers, there was nothing much for Zhang Xuan to worry. However, the tricky part was the deceased seniors.

Some of them had reached 4-star and even higher. As a mere 2-star master teacher, how could you stand against them?

"My mind is made up!" Zhang Xuan said.

There was nothing for him to worry about! Those people were only lingering wills now; if they thought that he would be an easy target, they were about to be proven wrong!

Chapter 446: The Frenzied Mo Tianxue

In Tianwu Kingdom, the head of the Shadow Squad clasped his fist.

"Your Majesty, Her Highness and Zhang shi have arrived at Xuanyuan Kingdom!"

"Un!"

Nodding his head, Mo Tianxue seemed to have recalled something and sighed. "There's nothing bad about the lass except that she's too sentimental. Sigh, she has truly wasted all of the efforts I have spent on her!"

The rise of Mo Hongyi had left Mo Tianxue worried about the succession of the throne. As such, he had always raised his most talented daughter, Mo Yu, as the future empress of the kingdom. In the end, that lass, for her own personal feelings, decided to leave with Zhang shi. This had left him both worried and helpless.

The saying 'it was impossible to keep a daughter by one's side' was indeed true.

Zhang shi was incredibly talented, and a person of his caliber couldn't possibly remain in Tianwu Kingdom for his entire life. Since there was no hope, she should have just given up on it.

She could have remained within the kingdom to cultivate

properly and raise her strength to take over the throne.

Mo Hongyi's prestige had been on the steady rise ever since he became a 2-star master teacher, and at such a crucial period, she chose to leave instead.

When everyone has forgotten about you, how do you intend to inherit the throne?

He had truly no idea what was going through the mind of that lass!

"Her Highness might be willful but she listens obediently to Your Majesty's words. She'll probably return after sending Zhang shi off to the Myriad Kingdom Alliance!" the head of the Shadow Squad said.

As the head of the private elite squadron under Mo Tianxue, he was a close aide of the latter and understood his thoughts well.

On top of strength, prestige was also an important factor for one's succession to the throne.

The reason why Mo Tianxue was reluctant to allow Mo Yu to go with Zhang Xuan was because he wanted to keep her by the side so as to have her come into contact with governance matters and achieve some accomplishments in the field so as to win the respect and loyalty of the royal court. Only then would he be able to pass on the throne without any worries.

Yet, she went ahead and left without even informing him. It was no wonder that he was angry.

"Let's just hope that's the case!"

Mo Tianxue smiled bitterly, "If she were able to win Zhang shi's heart, I wouldn't mind it. She would probably have a brighter future by his side anyway. However, Zhang shi is an incredibly talented person, and I can tell that he has no such intentions about her. Even if she were to accompany him all the way to the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, it would just be a waste of time!"

The head of the Shadow Squad had no idea how to alleviate Mo Tianxue's worries.

Even though he had never interacted with this Zhang shi, he had seen him various times from the shadows and heard much about his affairs. A genius of that caliber belonged to the larger world out there and wouldn't be tied down by romance.

"Alright, let's not talk about this for now..."

Putting aside his worries, Mo Tianxue was just about to bring up another topic when an elder barged anxiously into the hall.

"Your Majesty, Your Majesty..."

That elder's face was flushed, and his entire body was trembling intensely in agitation.

"Elder Qu, aren't you responsible for keeping watch at the Communication Wall? What are you doing here?"

Mo Tianxue frowned.

Elder Qu, whose full name was Mo Qu, was an elder of the royal family.

Since the Lin Clan had a Communication Wall that could contact Xuanyuan Kingdom, naturally, the Tianwu royal family had one as well. Through this, they could communicate with Xuanyuan Kingdom, understand the various changes in the other country swiftly, and make appropriate countermeasures.

This Elder Qu was the person responsible for maintaining contact at the Communication Wall. His position was equivalent to Pavilion Elder Qian of the Tianxuan Kingdom, and he was the head of intelligence of the entire kingdom.

This job required him to keep a constant lookout on the various happenings around the region, and thus, he would normally send a subordinate to report to the emperor. Unless something huge had occurred, it was impossible for him to report an issue personally.

"Your Majesty, something huge... has occurred!" Elder Qu exclaimed in agitation.

"Something huge?" Mo Tianxue turned to look at Elder Qu.
"What is it?"

"Zhang shi has arrived at Xuanyuan Royal City, and just today, he caused a huge ruckus in the capital and he... killed Crown Prince Ding Mu!" Elder Qu said.

"Killed Crown Prince Ding Mu?" Mo Tianxue's face paled, and he nearly fainted from shock.

The standing of a crown prince of a Conferred Kingdom was far above that of an emperor of a Tier 1 Kingdom... To kill a figure of such standing, was that Zhang shi insane, or was he simply tired of living?

"Indeed! Not just so, he even did it in the midst of Crown Prince Ding Mu's inauguration ceremony!"

As though oblivious to Mo Tianxue's darkened complexion, Elder Qu continued, "In the end, even Old Ancestor Ding Hong was alarmed..."

"By old ancestor, do you mean Emperor Ding Hong whose name took the world by storm? He... is still alive?" Mo Tianxue's body swayed weakly.

Hundred years ago, this Emperor Ding Hong had already reached the level of a Transcendent Mortal. Everyone had thought that he

was dead given his long period of absence, but to think that he was still alive!

"Indeed. Not only so, he has even become a Transcendent Mortal expert..." Elder Qu said.

"Transcendent Mortal?" Mo Tianxue's voice trembled. "Then Zhang shi..."

Mo Tianxue didn't complete his words, but the meaning behind it was clear. Zhang shi was most probably dead by now.

After running over to kill the inaugurating crown prince, how could the other party's old ancestor possibly spare you?

Mo Tianxue knew this Zhang shi quite well. He was able to defeat a Half-Zhizun with the strength of a Zongshi realm pinnacle, but against a Transcendent Mortal... the gap was simply too large. It was like the difference between a divine dragon and a measly ant.

Most probably, Zhang shi was already reduced to a lump of flesh under the might of the old ancestor.

"Oh, Zhang shi is alright. He broke through the Half-Transcension realm on the spot and subdued Emperor Ding Hong..." Elder Qu said.

"What?" Mo Tianxue's head spun.

To reach Half-Transcension from the cultivation realm of Zongshi realm pinnacle on the spot? Are you joking with me?

On top of that, there's a huge difference between a Half-Transcension cultivator and a Transcendent Mortal cultivator. How could Zhang Shi possibly subdue the other party?

"This is what the report from the other side of the Communication Wall said, and I've confirmed it myself. There's no mistake about it!" Elder Qu nodded. "On top of that... that..."

"What?"

Elder Qu hesitated for a moment as he recalled the content of the report on the Communication Wall, and even until now, he seemed as though he was still unable to believe the news. "The primary reason why I'm here is to report this news to you. After Zhang Shi subdued Emperor Ding Hong, he nominated Princess Mo Yu for the throne, and she is now the ruler of Xuanyuan Kingdom..."

"The ruler... of Xuanyuan Kingdom?"

Mo Tianxue nearly fell off his throne.

He had just said that Mo Yu was wasting her time over her sentiments, and the latter... went on to become the ruler of Xuanyuan Kingdom!

Did this slap have to come so violently?

There were at least twenty vassal kingdoms like Tianwu beneath Xuanyuan Kingdom. To become the ruler of such a powerful kingdom...

Why did it seem like a dream?

"But Yu-er's cultivation is only at Tongxuan realm pinnacle. How could she become the ruler of a Conferred Kingdom?"

Recovering from the shock, Mo Tianxue suddenly realized that there were some things that were amiss.

When Mo Yu left, she was only at Tongxuan realm pinnacle. It was already difficult for her to ascend to the Tianwu Kingdom throne given her lacking cultivation. To ascend to the throne with such strength in Xuanyuan Kingdom, wasn't that no different from committing suicide?

"This... Zhang shi also thought that her cultivation was too low, so he helped her achieve a breakthrough on the spot through Cultivation Impartation. Currently, Princess Mo Yu is a... Zhizun realm pinnacle expert!" Elder Qu said.

"Achieve a breakthrough on the spot? Zhizun realm pinnacle?"

Putong!

Mo Tianxue's body shook so violently that he fell to the ground. A dazed look was on his face, and he didn't even feel pain when he pulled out a fistful of hair from his head.

Tongxuan realm pinnacle... reaching Zhizun realm pinnacle on the spot. Zhang shi, can you tell me how did you do it?

"Yu-er... sure has good eyes..."

After a long period of time, Mo Tianxue swallowed a mouthful of saliva before muttering slowly with a pale face.

Chapter 447: Soul Oracle

In the Master Teacher Pavilion of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, a gray-robed elder stood at the very front of a room. A warm voice flowing from his mouth drew in spiritual energy from the surroundings.

Spirit Gathering Diction, an ability that only 5-star master teachers possessed!

Seated on the front rows of the room were elders dressed in master teacher robes. All of them were seated upright, and as the words from the gray-robed elder in front washed over them, they fell into a trance-like state.

Weng!

The voice eventually came to a stop, and the gray-robed elder placed his hands behind his back.

"I'll be stopping here for today. If any of you have any questions, feel free to raise them!"

"Hong shi, sorry for the trouble. I'm truly grateful to you for conducting a lecture here right after your long journey!" Pavilion Master Kang stood up and smiled.

Hong shi, Hong Qian, was a 5-star master teacher from Hongfeng Empire. He was specially invited over to host the Master Teacher

Tournament.

The gray-robed elder Hong shi nodded.

"It's the duty of master teachers to solve the problems that a cultivator meets so that everyone can become strong. There's nothing troubling about that!"

"Yes!" Pavilion Master Kang nodded. Just as he was about to continue speaking, the ground shuddered and a bell chimed four times.

"Four chimes, someone is crashing a pavilion? To think that I would meet with such an interesting matter right after my arrival!" Hong shi chuckled.

The different number of chimes of the bell held different meanings in the Master Teacher Pavilion. Four consecutive chimes meant that someone was crashing a Master Teacher Pavilion within the territories of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance.

Even though Pavilion Crashing was equivalent to challenging an entire Master Teacher Pavilion, there were actually quite a few challengers every year. After all, success meant that one would gain great prestige and go down in history.

Master teachers were public figures. On top of being teachers, their reputation was important as well. In order to raise one's reputation quickly, there were many who were willing to take the

risk.

But of course, despite the great benefits Pavilion Crashing could bring, the penalties for failure were harsh as well.

"Wu shi, go and look into the matter. Find out which branch is it..."

Pavilion Master Kang frowned.

He felt embarrassed that such an incident occurred immediately after Hong shi's arrival.

"Yes!" The elder known as Wu shi backed out of the room. Before long, he returned and reported, "Reporting to Hong shi and pavilion master, it's from Xuanyuan Conferred Kingdom!"

"Xuanyuan Kingdom?"

Taken aback, Hong shi raised his head and stroked his beard, "I haven't been there for a period of time. My 3-star master teacher examination was taken there!"

"Now that Hong shi mentions it, I do remember the matter. Even though you were only there for less than three years, you towered over all of the master teachers of the kingdom with your talents!" Pavilion Master Kang replied after a moment of contemplation.

Even though Hong shi had already become an esteemed 5-star master teacher of Hongfeng Empire, he originated with Xuanyuan Kingdom, which resulted in his deep ties with the Myriad Kingdom Alliance.

Otherwise, he wouldn't have gone through the trouble to travel such a long distance to conduct a competition among the younger generation.

"Those are in the past now. But in any case, that person who crashed Xuanyuan Kingdom's Master Teacher Pavilion will probably be in for some pain!" Hong shi chuckled. "I've left a sliver of my will there. Even a 4-star master teacher would find it hard to successfully crash the pavilion."

"You left your will there? It'll be nigh impossible for the challenger to pass then..."

For a moment, Pavilion Master Kang was stunned before a bitter smile crept onto his face.

Pavilion Crashing wasn't just about defeating all of the current master teachers within the Master Teacher Pavilion. The greatest difficulty lay in answering the questions raised by the will of the preceding generations' master teachers.

Hong shi was a 5-star master teacher who possessed incredible means. Since he had left behind a sliver of his will in Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher Pavilion, who could possibly crash the pavilion successfully?

Even Pavilion Master Kang himself, despite being the pavilion master of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance Master Teacher Pavilion, would find it hard to succeed, not to mention, a person from a Conferred Kingdom.

"Some youngster hoped to earn prestige quickly through Pavilion Crashing, but how can it be that easy?"

Nodding his head, Hong shi suddenly recalled some matters about the Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher Pavilion and said, "In the Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher Pavilion, other than me, three other 4-star master teacher left behind their wills as well. To get to me, the challenger would have to pass their tests first!"

"Those three tests are probably more than enough to halt the challenger in his footsteps..."

Pavilion Master Kang nodded. Just as he was about to continue speaking, the ground shook once more, and the bell chimed for five times consecutively.

"That... That person successfully crashed the pavilion?"

For an instant, everyone froze.

From the start of the crash until now, it had only been ten minutes or so. To defeat the will of three 4-star master teachers

and one 5-star master teacher in such a short period of time...

Wasn't that way too fast!

Hong shi was also stunned.

"Hurry up and find out who it is!"

A moment later, his lips quivered and he hurriedly instructed.

To answer the question raised by will in ten minutes and successfully crash the entire pavilion... How in the world did that person do it?

A huge commotion broke out within the entire Master Teacher Pavilion.

...

Hu!

While a huge commotion was going on in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance Master Teacher Pavilion, in Xuanyuan Kingdom, Luo Qianhong was staring at the darkened Master Teacher Tower with a helpless look.

There were various steps to Pavilion Crashing. Firstly, one had to

defeat all of the master teachers in the Master Teacher Pavilion.

He knew that there was no one in the Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher Pavilion who was a match for Zhang Xuan and there was no point in battling, so he immediately activated the Master Teacher Tower.

Retained within the Master Teacher Tower were the wills of predecessors. To successfully crash a pavilion, one had to walk from the bottom of the tower to the top and extinguish all of the lights in the midst.

Given that the tower was completely dark already, this meant that... Zhang Xuan had passed all of the tests and succeeded in his Pavilion Crashing.

Jiya!

A young man walked out from the tower gate.

Glancing at the young face which reflected an age below twenty, Luo Qianhong shook his head.

He had already guessed that the other party would succeed after his outstanding performance at the Heaven's Altar, but even so... he didn't expect the other party to succeed so quickly.

Those were the wills from a 5-star master teacher and three 4-star master teachers! To pass their tests in ten minutes, even a 5-

star master teacher would be hard-pressed to do so!

What kind of monster was he?

"Since Zhang shi has succeeded in the Pavilion Crashing, the Xuanyuan Kingdom Master Teacher Pavilion will listen to your commands."

Stepping forward, Luo Qianhong clasped his fist.

The rules had stated that the losing side of the Pavilion Crashing had to fulfill the demands of the winning side without any complaints.

"I require books and herbs regarding waking a dormant soul!" Zhang Xuan said.

The reason why he caused a ruckus on the Heaven's Altar and killed Crown Prince Ding Mu was to exact vengeance for Lu Chong.

"Zhang shi intends to attempt waking your student?" Luo Qianhong asked.

While Zhang Xuan was in the midst of crashing the pavilion, he had looked into the entire happenings from start to end. He felt great regret for listening to Ding Mu's lies, and at the same time, he found himself impressed by Zhang shi.

How deep of a relationship between a student and teacher must be for a student to be willing to put himself at risk for his teacher?

And for a teacher to cause a ruckus at a Conferred Kingdom and challenge a Master Teacher Pavilion for his student...

"Un!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

"Dormant soul... Honestly speaking, even our Master Teacher Pavilion isn't qualified to come into contact with information regarding souls. However..."

At this point, Luo Qianhong hesitated.

"Pavilion Master Luo, feel free to speak your mind." Zhang Xuan immediately replied.

"I do know that if one becomes a 7-star master teacher, one will gain the ability to influence one's consciousness and search souls! Other than that... there's an ancient occupation known as 'Soul Oracle'. If you were to find their inheritance, you might be able to learn their means and wake up your student's dormant soul!" Luo Qianhong said.

Zhang Xuan frowned.

"Soul oracle? What's that?"

Zhang Xuan had heard the matter regarding a 7-star master teacher being able to search one's soul and rouse a person's consciousness from Mo Yu, but he had never heard of a soul oracle before.

Despite reading so many books and assimilating so much knowledge, there was nothing on this topic at all.

"Soul oracle is a unique occupation that existed in ancient times. I've only heard about this from the predecessors, but it's said that the soul oracles were able to summon and gather souls through celestial dances. However, this occupation has already disappeared for more than ten thousand years, and it's regarded as a mere legend nowadays. As such, no one can tell what kind of abilities they possess for sure."

Luo Qianhong pondered for a moment before replying.

"It'll be easy for me to determine whether it's a legend or not!"

With a flick of his wrist, Zhang Xuan took out a book and wrote a line of words on it. After which, he placed his fingers on it and muttered 'flaws' in his head.

Weng!

For matters that couldn't be ascertained, Zhang Xuan would use this method to confirm its authenticity.

There was nothing that could elude the eyes of heavens. Its words of guarantee were more reliable and useful than anything else.

Casually flipping it open, Zhang Xuan's breathing began to hasten, and his fists subconsciously clenched together.

A line of words was written on the blank page, 'Soul oracles can summon and gather souls', and the book compiled in the Library of Heaven's Path didn't indicate any error with the statement.

In other words...

It was right!

To think that there would be an occupation capable of manipulating souls in this world!

Suppressing his agitation, Zhang Xuan asked, "Pavilion Master Luo, do you know where the inheritance of soul oracles can be found? Or where I can find books regarding the occupation?"

As long as he gathered sufficient books, he would be able to form a Heaven's Path manual and learn the occupation. It didn't matter much to him whether the inheritance was complete or not.

After a moment of contemplation, Luo Qianhong said, "I don't know where you can find the inheritance of soul oracle. However... recently, there have been rumors that a [Soulless Metal

Humanoid] was found in Honghai City of Myriad Kingdom Alliance, and an auction over it will be conducted in the next few days. The Soulless Metal Humanoid is known to be a product created by soul oracles. If they have truly left behind an inheritance, you might be able to find some clues on it."

"Honghai City?" Zhang Xuan frowned.

A map of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance appeared in his head, and he immediately located Honghai City.

Even though the Myriad Kingdom Alliance was known as an alliance, it was actually an empire ruling over all of the other kingdoms in the region.

The position of the 'alliance head' was somewhat similar to the position of an emperor in a kingdom.

Honghai City was a large city within the territory of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, and its scale was on par with the capital, Myriad Kingdom City.

"Honghai City is known as the trading hub of the entire the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. The Soulless Metal Humanoid is known to be a special puppet crafted by ancient soul oracles to protect themselves at close proximity. Since one of them was found there, you might really find something there," Luo Qianhong said.

While the chances of unearthing the inheritance of the soul

oracles were extremely slim, it still beats searching and engaging the help of a 7-star master teacher.

A 7-star master teacher could be considered to be a figure that stood at the pinnacle of this world. Putting aside how even the strongest experts of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance had never met such a figure before, there was also no reason why a 7-star master teacher would go through the trouble of treating the student of an insignificant person like Zhang Xuan.

"Un!"

After hearing the other party's explanation, Zhang Xuan made up his mind. "Since I'm heading for Myriad Kingdom City anyway, I'll drop by Honghai City to take a look then!"

Chapter 448: The Levels of Transcendent Mortal

A gigantic spirit beast glided through a sea of white clouds.

From the back of this gigantic spirit beast, Zhang Xuan glanced out of a window to peer into the distance.

This Transcendent Mortal 3-dan spirit beast was 'gongzi' Zhao Feiwu's mount.

Upon knowing that there was a clue to the inheritance of soul oracles in Honghai City, Zhang Xuan immediately gathered Zhao Ya and the others and left for Honghai City.

As Mo Yu was now the empress of Xuanyuan Kingdom, there were countless matters on her agenda, thus making it imperative that she remains in the capital. Before departing, Zhang Xuan instructed Luo Qianhong to take care of her.

Initially, Zhang Xuan intended to ride the Steelfang Howling Beast to Honghai City. However, after learning that it was over a million kilometers away, he immediately dropped the idea.

Given the Howling Firmament Beast's current speed as a Zhizun realm savage beast, even if it were to travel non-stop through the day and night, it would still take at least a month for it to cover the distance.

In comparison, Zhao Feiwu's Transcendent Mortal 3-dan mount was much faster. On top of that, its back was broad so it wasn't cramped even when the entire group was riding on it. Besides, Zhao Feiwu insisted on it, and Zhang Xuan couldn't find any reason to turn her down either.

To date, it was already the fifth day since they took off from Xuanyuan Royal City.

"Teacher, aren't you a poison master? Why did you become a subordinate of the envoy..."

It wasn't easy for Gu Mu to meet his teacher, so the duo started catching up. Gu Mu raised a doubt that he had been harboring in his mind ever since he learned of 'gongzi's' true identity.

Poison master was an occupation that left others trembling in fear, and most would choose to keep their distance. Given such, how did his teacher become a subordinate to this 'gongzi'?

"The reason why I left the Poison Hall back then was to exact vengeance. However, I fell into my enemy's trap instead, and even though I still managed to kill him in the end, I was severely injured in the process as well. It was 'gongzi's' father who saved me... In order to prevent others from learning of my identity as a poison master, I've been avoiding the use poison in public since then!" Jin Conghai said.

Just like what Gu Mu said, it was rare for a poison master to be subordinated to another. After all, even if poison masters were

willing to be subordinated, considering their horrid reputation on the continent, who would be willing to take them in?

After Jin Conghai was saved by 'gongzi's' father, he had been serving the latter by his side. To prevent others from learning of his identity as a poison master, he chose to avoid the usage of poison, and it had been several years since then. In the eyes of others, he was nothing more than a diligent subordinate. Little did they know that a fearsome 4-star poison master hid beneath that cover.

"Teacher!"

On the other hand, Yuan Tao and the others walked over to Zhang Xuan.

After consuming the spirit beast blood essence, Yuan Tao's Emperor's Bloodline was further awakened, thus inducing a significant leap in his cultivation. With this, he caught up with Zhao Ya, who had been the strongest in the group with a cultivation of Zongshi realm pinnacle.

As for Zheng Yang, Wang Ying, Liu Yang, and Sun Qiang, Zhang Xuan gave them a lotus seed each.

Instead of raising their cultivation through Cultivation Impartation, he imparted them a simplified version of Heaven's Path Divine Art instead.

Even so, their cultivation increased by leaps and bounds. In just five days, they had smashed through multiple realms consecutively, thus reaching Zongshi realm primary stage.

Even though they were still slightly weaker than Zhao Ya and Yuan Tao, the foundations of their cultivation were strong and stable. More importantly, they hadn't even consumed a hundredth of the energy contained within the lotus seed.

By the time they fully absorb the energy contained within the lotus seed, they would be Zhizun realm pinnacle cultivators as well.

Zhao Feiwu and the others suffered a breakdown when they saw Zhang Xuan giving away the Crimson Flame Lotus Seed so casually to his students and subordinates to enhance the growth of their cultivation. However, as the shocks piled up, they found themselves gradually building up an immunity to his inconceivable actions and feats.

To them, Zhang Xuan was a person who simply couldn't be measured through common sense.

Rather than racking their brains over it, they might as well just accept him as he is.

"Honghai City is right before us!"

Before long, a massive city appeared before everyone's sight.

From their height, the countless buildings beneath the sun looked no different from gleaming small dots.

The scale of Xuanyuan Royal City was astonishing, but it couldn't hold a candle against Honghai City. It was as though putting a remote mountainside village against a bustling city!

As expected of one of the largest cities of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. Putting everything aside, just the large and refined infrastructures reflected wealth far above that of a Conferred Kingdom.

"Honghai City is a trading hub where merchants from all over the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, be it Xuanyuan Kingdom, Chihe Kingdom, or Liusu Kingdom, gather... Goods tend to fetch a higher price here, so the merchants from the various Conferred Kingdoms would export their goods here to earn a greater profit margin. Over time, Honghai City grew to become the most prosperous commercial city throughout the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance!" Zhao Feiwu explained.

Zhang Xuan nodded his head.

There was some information on Honghai City among the books of Tianwu Kingdom's book collection vault. Known as the City of Merchants, most of the trade and interactions among the vassal kingdoms of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance were conducted here.

In terms of prosperity, it even exceeded that of the capital,

Myriad Kingdom City.

"The Myriad Kingdom Alliance is of a significantly higher-tier than Xuanyuan Kingdom. Even though your strength has reached Half-Transcension and you can be considered rather strong for those around your age, it's best for you to remain careful here."

Zhao Feiwu advised with a grim expression. "The Honghai City Master Teacher Pavilion has a 4-star master teacher behind it. Even though he's only a 4-star intermediate master teacher, his true strength is at Transcendent Mortal 3-dan Yin-Yang realm, and he's not to be trifled with!"

"Yin-Yang realm?" Zhang Xuan asked.

He knew that above the Fighter realm was Transcendent Mortal, and that there were nine levels to it. However, he didn't know the details behind it.

"There is a total of 9 dans to Transcendent Mortals, and they are 1-dan Prolonged Longevity, 2-dan Origin Energy, 3-dan Yin-Yang, 4-dan Clarifying Turbidity, 5-dan Consonant Spirit, 6-dan Cosmos Bridge, 7-dan Perfect Harmonization, 8-dan Ethereal Treading, and 9-dan Chrysalis!"

Knowing that Zhang Xuan was unaware of the details about the Transcendent Mortal realm, Zhao Feiwu began explaining, "You should already be aware of Prolonged Longevity realm by now. While one's strength will remain at 100,000 ding throughout this realm, one's lifespan will increase by a fair amount with every

breakthrough. The average lifespan of a Prolonged Longevity realm pinnacle cultivator is around two hundred years.

"At 2-dan Origin Energy realm, the zhenqi within a cultivator's body will be converted to Origin Energy, thus granting one the strength of manipulating the natural energy present in the environment. The beginning of another origin, the unraveling of a whole new world... There's a huge difference between zhenqi and Origin Energy. The former represented strength and one's existential potential whereas the latter allows one to tap into the power of nature to actualize the mysticisms of the world!

"Take for example, if an ordinary paper is infused with Origin Energy, it could gain 'spirit', enabling it to float in the air and dance by itself. Thus, Origin Energy realm is also known as Mystical Energy realm, in which, Mystical Energy is another address for Origin Energy.

"As for 3-dan Yin-Yang realm, the contrasting nature of yin and yang energy present in one's body will amalgamate, complementing the flaws of one another to bring forth greater power. As such, Yin-Yang realm cultivators are capable of drawing forth incredible destructive might! Take that cliff in the distance for example, a Yin-Yang realm cultivator would be able to easily crush it with a single fist."

Zhao Feiwu had a deep understanding of the various cultivation realms of Transcendent Mortal, and she began explaining them to Zhang Xuan.

"Destroying a cliff with a single fist?"

Zheng Yang and the others were dumbstruck.

They thought that the ability to hurl rocks weighing over a thousand kilograms at Zongshi realm was already an impressive feat.

There is a limit to a human's strength, and destroying a cliff with a single fist is far beyond the means of a human. That is already at the level of deities.

That is also why the Transcendent Mortal realm was known as the Divine realm. The strength Transcendent Mortals possess isn't something that mortal Fighters, or even Half-Transcension cultivators, can take on.

"And for Transcendent Mortal 4-dan Clarifying Turbidity, as most would know, different cultivators will have different levels of purity for their Origin Energy and different weights for their soul. Cultivate diligently in this realm, and one will be able to bring up the purity of their Origin Energy. In other words, this is an opportunity for one to purify their Origin Energy (zhenqi). I believe you should understand the huge difference between an inferior zhenqi and an intermediate zhenqi!"

Zhao Feiwu chuckled as she continued, "Pavilion Master Kang of Myriad Kingdom City is a 4-star pinnacle master teacher, and his cultivation realm is at this level. Only one who has reached this level of cultivation can one tread fearlessly around the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. As for 5-dan Consonant Spirit, it's only hearsay

for me. It's already beyond the level of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, so I'm not too sure about the details either."

"I see!"

Zhang Xuan nodded.

The 9 dans of Transcendent Mortal is similar to the 9 dans of Fighter. The progression through Transcendent Mortal realm can be considered to be a layer stacking over the previous, and there are no shortcuts to it. The only way to advance is through ceaseless diligence and perseverance.

But to Zhang Xuan, it was just a matter of finding sufficient cultivation technique manuals to form the corresponding Heaven's Path Divine Art.

"We're here, let's alight!"

Amidst their conversation, they finally arrived at Honghai City. The spirit beast flapped its wings gently as it gradually descended to the ground.

Just like the other cities, one needed to pay a toll fee to enter the city. Zhang Xuan flashed his master teacher emblem and he was exempted from the fee.

The broad streets of Honghai City were bustling, and one could see all kinds of objects being sold everywhere.

Phantom pinnacle weapons, the strongest weapon tier among the possessions of the wealthy Lin Clan, could be found easily in any shop in the area.

"Gold coins are technically useless in Honghai City. The currencies that are most commonly used here are Tutelage Jade Tokens and spirit stones," Zhao Feiwu said. "The Tutelage Jade Token of master teachers are valued based on the rank of the issuer. A 4-star master teacher Jade Tutelage Token is equivalent to a hundred from a 3-star master teacher, and a 3-star master teacher's Jade Tutelage Token is equivalent to a hundred from a 2-star master teacher, so on and so forth. As for spirit stones, a 3-star master teacher's Tutelage Jade Token is worth around ten of them!"

"One can use Tutelage Jade Tokens for trading?"

Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up.

It was no wonder why master teachers were so well-respected around here. To think that even their lesson time was regarded as a currency! Even if one wasn't interested in cultivating, there is no reason for one to shun money.

But thinking deeper into it, it did make sense.

The guidance of a master teacher could solve the various problems and hiccups that cultivators meet during their training. Putting aside two hours, even just a few minutes of guidance could

play a pivotal role toward a cultivator's breakthrough.

Given the value of these Tutelage Jade Tokens, it wasn't surprising for it to be traded as a form of currency.

After listening to Zhao Feiwu's introduction of Honghai City and gaining a deeper understanding of it, Zhang Xuan asked, "I heard that a Soulless Metal Humanoid has been uncovered in this area. If I wish to find where it's sold, where should I go?"

"A treasure as invaluable as the Soulless Metal Humanoid would usually be auctioned by the Appraiser Hall. If I'm not wrong, it should be within the Appraiser Hall at the moment!" Zhao Feiwu pondered for a moment before replying.

"Appraiser Hall?" Zhang Xuan asked. "Is it the guild for appraisers?"

Back in Tianxuan Kingdom, Zhang Xuan had once met a 'master appraiser'... Mo Yang.

That fellow was only an apprentice, but he impersonated a master appraiser to scam others for money.

And unfortunately, many fell for his deception.

Even though appraiser was only a Middle Nine Paths occupation, due to their ability to determine the value of treasures, it was an exceptionally popular profession.

Chapter 449: Appraiser Hall [2in1]

The cities that Zhang Xuan visited previously didn't have an appraiser guild, so he didn't expect to see an Appraiser Hall here in Honghai City. Since that was the case, they should conduct appraiser examinations here as well.

With this, Zhang Xuan could consider taking the examination so that he could conduct appraisals as a source of income.

Otherwise, even if he knew that the Soulless Metal Humanoid was here, he would have no money to buy it.

If anyone else were to know of his thoughts, they would definitely fall speechless.

Even though appraisers weren't part of the Upper Nine Paths, their examination was publicly known for its difficulty. Every appraiser would have to spend decades of their lives dedicated to the study of treasures before they could gain an in-depth understanding of the subject required to pass the examination.

Yet, this fellow wanted to take the examination just because he was short of money. If anyone else were to hear his words, they would definitely find themselves speechless.

"Let's go to the Appraiser Hall!"

With a plan in mind, Zhang Xuan immediately asked around for

its location before heading over with the group.

The Appraiser Hall was grand and imposing. On top of being a guild for appraisers, it was also a massive trading market. All kinds of goods were placed on the counters, and a huge crowd walked in and out of the halls. Even before arriving at the location itself, Zhang Xuan already found himself awed by the bustle before him.

"This is a market managed by the Appraiser Hall. Most of the goods in here are authentic, having been verified by the Appraiser Hall, thus paving way for it to become the largest trading market in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance!"

Seeing the astonished expression on the face of this incredible genius, Zhao Feiwu couldn't help but feel slightly gleeful.

Due to the unique nature of the occupation, the Appraiser Hall had become a symbol of trust among the population. Most of the objects that the Appraiser Hall dealt in were expensive before the appraisal, and thus, most people were willing to fork out an additional sum to ensure the authenticity of the goods bought. As such, the business conducted by the guild grew steadily over time.

This was precisely the reason why even though appraiser wasn't a member of the Upper Nine Paths, it was one of the most lucrative occupations.

Most master teachers preferred to take on this occupation as their supporting occupation.

However, appraising required one to have a deep understanding of the artifacts' history, background, purpose, material, origin... Only when one was able to apply such vast knowledge in appraising would one be able to achieve some accomplishments in the art. Even so, the further one climbed, the harder the examinations became.

Thus, even though there were many people who dreamed of taking the appraiser examination, there were very few who had managed to achieve a rank of 3-star and above. In fact, the number was even far beneath that of master teachers.

This was the main reason why there were very few Appraiser Halls on the continent, such that even a place like Tianwu Kingdom didn't have an Appraiser Hall. This was also why an impersonator like Mo Yang was able to win the admiration of so many people easily.

"Can appraisers ensure that their appraisals are accurate?"

Sun Qiang couldn't help but ask.

He had once operated a shop in a market, and thus, he knew a thing or two about imitations. So what if one was an appraiser? There was no one who could ensure that their judgement would be hundred percent correct all of the time!

After all, it was normal for a mortal to err.

Just like how it was impossible for one to tread along the riverside often and avoid getting wet, formidable appraisers couldn't possibly ensure that they wouldn't make a mistake in their entire life either.

"Appraisers are limited by their discernment ability and rank, so it is indeed impossible for them to guarantee that all of their appraisals are accurate. Under such circumstances, they would invite other appraisers to appraise it together, and if the invited ones are unable to give a concrete answer as well, they would simply give the client their evaluation on the artifact to serve as a basis for consideration." Zhao Feiwu said.

"But that's no different from giving no answer at all!" Sun Qiang shook his head.

"An appraiser is only allowed to make three judgmental errors throughout his life. Once they exceed this limit, they'll be stripped of their license. Thus, when stumbling across something they're unsure of, they won't give their judgement easily!" Jin Conghai interjected.

"Three times?"

"Un. From the moment one becomes an appraiser, every artifact that one appraises will be documented and filed. If something goes wrong with the artifact, it'll be considered as an error. Once the number of errors exceed three times, regardless of the rank of the appraiser, he'll be stripped of his license!" Jin Conghai continued.

Throughout his years, he had seen many appraisers being stripped of their licenses just because of a careless mistake.

Some of them had accrued prestigious reputations throughout their lives, only to lose it all due to a few careless mistakes.

Everyone fell silent.

Even though many people craved to become an appraiser, it seemed like this occupation wasn't as easy as it seemed.

Once the number of mistakes one committed exceeded three, one's license could be revoked... But who could ensure one wouldn't make any mistakes at all?

"Actually, all occupations are the same. The rules governing master teachers are even stricter; one's reputation could potentially be destroyed completely if they were to make a single mistake in their guidance, resulting in a loss in trust in one!" Seeing how everyone was sympathizing with appraisers, Zhang Xuan shook his head.

Before he came to this world, his previous self also committed the same error. Due to misguidance, he caused a student's cultivation to go berserk, resulting in Zhang Xuan being unable to recruit even a single student after his arrival.

"Indeed, physicians are the same as well. A single error could possibly result in a death..." Zhao Feiwu nodded in agreement as

she glanced at the youngster before her.

Even though he seemed to be around the same age as her, how was he able to solve the Innate Muscular Deficiency, that even 5-star physicians were helpless before, and treat her?

"So many things..."

"How beautiful..."

Just as Zhao Feiwu was contemplating over how the latter managed to learn his medical skills, the excited voices of Yuan Tao and the others sounded from behind.

While she was deep in contemplation, the group had already walked into the grand hall. Everywhere that the eye could see were vendors selling their goods, and the variety of goods covered dozens of occupations.

Medicine, pills, cauldron, weapons, formation plates... As though stars in the skies, they densely filled the hall within, making it hard for one's mind to process everything.

The treasures which were impossible to see under normal circumstances gleamed all around them, stimulating their minds.

"Those who are passing by, come over and take a look. This is the newest [Treasure Discerning Mirror]. It has the ability of determining the value of an artifact automatically, giving you

assurance when you're buying other goods. It's only going off at ten spirit stones now! If you don't buy it, you'll be making a huge loss and putting yourself at risk of scams!" a young man shouted.

"Treasure Discerning Mirror?"

Zhao Ya and the others blinked their eyes in interest, and they prepared to head over.

"It's just an ordinary mirror, it's a scam. If that were really a Treasure Discerning Mirror, he wouldn't be selling the mirror here for ten spirit stones!"

Zhang Xuan shook his head.

Even without using the Library of Heaven's Path, he could determine the value and background of some of the less potent artifacts via the Eye of Insight.

With just a single look, he could tell that the supposed Treasure Discerning Mirror in the young man's hand was a fake.

"A scam? Isn't everything in here authentic?" Zheng Yang couldn't help but glance doubtfully at Zhao Feiwu.

The other party had just said that the Appraiser Hall served as a guarantee for the authenticity of the goods here, so why would there be an imitation here?

"How many artifacts are there here?" Zhao Feiwu rolled her eyes as she gestured to the surroundings.

"There are at least several tens of millions of goods here, perhaps even a hundred million!"

Zheng Yang said, while taking a look around. "Furthermore, that is only as far as my eye can see. There are still some places beyond my view, so... there should be even more than that!"

There were nearly a hundred thousand booths scattered throughout the market, and innumerable treasures were placed neatly on each booth. Tallying up the numbers, there was indeed a frightening number of artifacts.

"Indeed. Given how many artifacts there are here, the appraisers would die of exhaustion before they appraised everything here! Besides, there is a huge flow of goods in and out of the Appraiser Hall daily — How could it be possible to keep track of all of them?"

Zhao Feiwu chuckled, "By authentic, I mean the goods labelled with the insignia of the Appraiser Hall. It would be best for one to not buy any goods without this label, otherwise one would be putting themselves at risk of a scam!"

"Oh!"

The crowd nodded.

As the largest market in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, there were too many vendors in the Appraiser Hall for them to take note of. Even if every single appraiser in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance were to be gathered here, it would be impossible for them to appraise everything here.

"But of course, if you find something suited for you, you can feel free to buy it. If you're worried, you can pay an exorbitant fee to have an appraiser upstairs appraise it. If it's authentic, then you're making a profit. Otherwise, you'll be making a loss!" Zhao Feiwu said.

Just like treasure speculation, buying something that hadn't been appraised was highly dependent on one's eye of discernment and luck. Without sufficient luck, all one could do was to lament over one's own misfortune.

"Appraiser sure is a lucrative occupation..."

Putting aside the commission fee from the market, the appraisal service they offer also made customers willingly part with their money in exchange for security. As expected of one of the most lucrative occupations in the world.

"Come and look, I have a [Water Continental Fish] here! As long as one holds this fish in one's mouth, one will be able to breathe freely underwater. It's definitely a treasure you must have!"

"Come and see this authentic [Antidote Grass]. It can cure one of

the most commonly seen seventeen poisons. With just a low price, you can buy some assurance on your life!"

"I have the Celestial Stone here! It'll illuminate your path like the stars themselves if you take it out at night. Those passing by, please don't miss this ideal opportunity..."

...

Countless voices echoed in the bustling market. Treasures lay everywhere, and if one had come in alone and ignorant, it'll be impossible for one to determine the authentic from the fake!

Walking along the various booths, Zhang Xuan suddenly frowned and came to a stop.

On a booth not too far away, a gray-colored artifact, around the size of one's palm, appeared in his view.

Even though his Eye of Insight hadn't reached the highest level yet, and he was still a far way from matching up to the means of an advanced master teacher, he was still able to easily determine the origin and background of normal artifacts.

But for some reason, he was unable to assess anything about this piece of scale at all.

"That's weird!"

Zhang Xuan turned to examine it more thoroughly, but his eyebrows only furrowed deeper.

If he was unable to see through it, did it mean that it was an invaluable treasure? That it was far beyond his current analytical means?

"Friend, are you interested in my product? I can guarantee you that all of my goods here are authentic..."

Upon seeing that there was a customer, the vendor hurried forward and welcomed Zhang Xuan with a bright smile.

"Authentic?"

Zhang Xuan briefly looked through the other goods in the booth.

There were many goods in this booth, numbering up to at least several hundred thousand. Weapons, pills, armor... most of the things that one could think of were present here. While there were many authentic goods amidst them, there were plenty of fakes as well.

'All of my goods here are authentic'. Indeed, the words of a merchant couldn't be trusted.

Zhang Xuan browsed through the various goods around the

booth as lines of insight rippled in his eyes.

He could see through the other objects easily, and there wasn't anything too valuable in its midst. Thus, his gaze didn't linger on them for too long before returning to the gray object. He immediately asked, "What is this?"

"This?"

The vendor was taken aback for a moment before a smile returned to his face. "Friend, you sure have good eyes. This is the most valuable item on my stand, and I've obtained it from the hands of a grave robber. I'm not too sure what kind of artifact it is. I've tried burning it and quenching it with water, but it doesn't leave a mark at all. On top of that, it's incredibly resilient, so I'm sure that it's definitely a top-notch treasure..."

"The most valuable item? Who do you think you are fooling?" Seeing the other party bragging about his goods, Zhao Feiwu harrumphed in disdain.

All vendors would often use this line in an attempt to drive up their prices.

What most valuable or most precious, one would truly be a fool if one were to believe it.

"How could I dare try to fool you all? This item is indeed very valuable! I've once had a 2-star appraiser to appraise it, but even

he's unable to make a judgement on it as well!" The vendor spoke indignantly.

"Alright, how much does it cost?" Unwilling to waste time arguing with the vendor over such insignificant matter, Zhang Xuan asked.

"Since you're interested in it, it only means that you're fated with it. Thus, I'll sell it to you at a discount then. A hundred spirit stones!"

Upon hearing the other party asking about the price, the vendor's eyes lit up.

"What did you say?"

Zhang Xuan was taken aback, and he nearly spurted a mouthful of blood.

He thought that since it was a street side vendor, the goods should be cheap. At the very most, it should only cost one or two spirit stones, or perhaps even gold coins... Yet, to think that it was that expensive.

A hundred spirit stones...

Zhang Xuan had already used up the final few pieces he had on the way here. Even if he were to sell himself away, he wouldn't be able to rake up such a price!

As expected of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. Even the prices they offered were equally frightening.

"Don't fall for it. Such vendors often offer a high price to hoodwink others!"

Seeing the other party's dumbfounded look, Zhao Feiwu chuckled and sent a telepathic message over.

"Hoodwink?"

"I'll haggle for you, just wait and see. I'll definitely get a low price for you!" Zhao Feiwu declared confidently.

"Alright!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

To him, a hundred spirit stones was an astronomical price; it was impossible for him to take out such a sum. Since Zhao Feiwu was offering to haggle for him, he was willing to allow her to give it a try.

"There's no need for you to give us this kind of nonsense, it's not like we've never bought from the Appraiser Hall before. A hundred spirit stones can already be exchanged for ten 3-star Tutelage Jade Token, do you think this lousy good of yours is worth this price? Why don't you rob a bank instead?"

Gesturing grandly, Zhao Feiwu put on the airs befitting of a veteran trader and glared at the merchant, "Give us an honest price!"

"Gongzi, you must be jesting with me. The price that I offered is an honest one. Even though this artifact may seem like nothing much, I spent a huge fortune to purchase it, and I even tried to recruit a blacksmith to work on it, just that it didn't work out in the end. Even though I can't say for sure what it is, one thing I'm certain of is that it's definitely a treasure..."

Laughing dryly, the vendor gritted his teeth and said, "However... since gongzi is a frequent customer, I'll make an exception then. How about this, I'll allow you to offer a price, and if it's suitable, you can take it away. Otherwise, let's just forget it!"

"This is more like it. Since that's the case, I'll offer you fifteen spirit stones then!"

Seeing that her 'old customer trick' was working, Zhao Feiwu gestured gleefully.

"Fifteen? Sigh, I guess this can be called fate as well. Alright then, I'll make a loss this time and sell it to you for fifteen!" The vendor said with a pained look.

"This works as well?"

Zhao Ya and the others staggered, and their eyes widened in

shock.

Slashing the original price of a hundred to fifteen in an instant, they thought the vendor would surely fly into a rage. Yet, the other party agreed to it immediately...

This was way too incredible!

If they hadn't seen this for themselves, they would never believe it to be true.

"Un!" Seeing that the other party had agreed to it, Zhao Feiwu felt as though she had just won a war. She turned to look at Zhang Xuan gleefully and said, "Alright, you can pay up now!"

"Pay up?"

Zhang Xuan shook his head.

He would love to pay up as well, but... fifteen spirit stones was a huge sum to him as well. Even if he were to sell all of his properties, he wouldn't be able to gather so much money.

"I think that fifteen spirit stones is still too expensive!" Zhang Xuan turned to look at the vendor.

"Fifteen spirit stones is too expensive? Friend, you must be joking. This is already the lowest price I can offer you..." The

vendor smiled bitterly.

"That... It's indeed a fair price already. If you're interested, you should just buy it down!" Seeing that the other party was still trying to haggle even though she had even slashed the price down to fifteen, Zhao Feiwu's eyebrows shot up.

You're here to buy the Soulless Metal Humanoid, right? Without several thousand or even ten thousand spirit stones, it's impossible for you to take it for yourself.

Even so, fifteen spirit stones for an object that interests you, and yet you still find it expensive?

"Is that so? Then, can you allow me to take a look so that I can get a clearer gauge on its price before we negotiate?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"Sure!" The vendor handed the gray artifact over to Zhang Xuan.

Only upon taking a closer look was Zhang Xuan able to see clearly what it was.

It was around the size of a palm, and it took on a shade of dark brown. It was slightly arched, reminiscent of a giant piece of fish scale.

There were some unique inscriptions densely scribbled on the side that was bent in, and there were some parts that were blurred,

making it impossible to discern what it was.

"Flaws!"

After taking a rough glance at its outer appearance, Zhang Xuan muttered silently.

Even though the Eye of Insight failed to work on it, the Library of Heaven's Path should be able to determine what the artifact was.

Hu!

A book appeared in the Library of Heaven's Path. Casually taking a look at it, Zhang Xuan's eyes immediately widened and his breathing hastened.

"This is indeed a treasure..."

On the book was a detailed introduction on the artifact, recording its name and flaws.

"Dragon Scale Protective Amulet, crafted by 6-star Craftsman Bai Xi two thousand years ago. It's capable of warding off the offense from a Transcendent Mortal 9-dan expert three times. Flaws: ..."

Zhang Xuan clenched his fists tightly.

Putting everything aside, just its ability to ward off the offense of a Transcendent Mortal 9-dan expert three times already made it a fearsome tool.

If he had obtained this artifact earlier, Lu Chong wouldn't have gotten injured and fall into a coma.

"I definitely must get this!"

Initially, Zhang Xuan only came over out of curiosity. He didn't expect it to be so valuable. Suppressing his agitation to prevent it from appearing on his face, he was just about to agree to the deal when another voice echoed.

"Fifteen spirit stones, is it? I'll take it!"

Turning around, Zhang Xuan saw a middle-aged man looking over with gleaming eyes, staring fixedly at the Dragon Scale Protective Amulet in his hands.

"Grandmaster Appraiser Liu Chang!"

The vendor seemed to recognize the other party and he hurriedly spoke up, "I would have given it to you straight since you're interested in this item. However, this friend here has set his eyes on it first, so... how about you two negotiate over this matter?"

"Grandmaster appraiser?"

Upon hearing how the vendor addressed the other party, Zhang Xuan immediately started assessing the middle-aged man.

There was an emblem pinned on his chest, on which, there were two bright stars.

A 2-star appraiser.

Appraisers would also stroll around this area sometimes to browse through the different artifacts and purchase items that interest them. If they were to stumble by some valuable treasure, they could make a huge killing as well.

Appraiser Liu Chang frowned. He turned to Zhang Xuan and ordered, "I'm interested in this item so give up on it!"

"Pardon me but I'm interested in it as well. I've no intentions on giving it up!" Zhang Xuan shook his head.

You must be pulling my leg! If I didn't know what it was, I could have given it to you. However, now that I know how valuable this artifact is, I wouldn't give it up even if you were to beat me to death!

This artifact could potentially save my life three times, only a fool would give up on it.

"You refuse to give up on it?"

Appraiser Liu Chang harrumphed coldly. Ignoring Zhang Xuan, he immediately turned to the vendor and said, "Even though he has set his eyes on it, he hasn't paid up yet, right? It's only natural for the good to go to the highest bidder. How about this, I'll offer you fifty spirit stones so sell it to me!"

"50?"

"50?"

The vendor's eyes lit up.

He obtained this artifact unintentionally so he had no idea how much it was actually worth. In his view, it was definitely a good deal for him to sell it for fifty spirit stones.

Agitated, he quickly turned to the young man and said, "Friend, Grandmaster Liu has already made an offer, so... if you're not going to offer anything higher, I'll have to ask of you to return the object to me..."

Zhang Xuan turned to look at the vendor and said, "Since that's the case, I'll offer you a price too. If you find it appropriate, sell this item to me!"

"Alright!" The vendor nodded.

"Fifty gold coins!" Zhang Xuan declared.

"Fifty... gold coins?"

The vendor froze for a moment, and he nearly spurted a mouthful of blood.

The other party had offered fifty spirit stones, and yet you still dare to offer fifty gold coins? Brother, are you taking me for a fool?

Chapter 450: Grave Robber

The gold coin was a generally accepted currency within the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. However, along with the rise in the rank of the kingdom, its use grew less and less frequent.

One couldn't buy a spirit stone even with a million gold coin. To offer fifty gold coin for something valued at fifty spirit stones? You must be joking!

By the side, Zhao Feiwu's eyebrows twitched and she nearly puked blood.

It took her so much effort to haggle the price down from a hundred to fifteen, yet this fellow offered fifty gold coins?

It was just a moment ago that she said that the other party might as well rob a bank... Why does it feel like Zhang Shi was the one who should be robbing a bank instead?

In a sense, Zhang Xuan's offer wasn't any different from daylight robbery.

"Fifty... gold coins?"

Appraiser Liu Chang was still worried that the other party might offer a higher price. Thus, when he heard Zhang Xuan's words, he nearly burst out laughing.

Where did this countryside bumpkin come from?

Spirit stones and gold coins were two different trading currencies with completely different values. I offered fifty spirit stones, yet you went ahead to offer fifty gold coins. Why don't you just tell the vendor to give it to you instead?

You sure are thick-skinned!

Appraiser Liu Chang glanced at Zhang Xuan in disdain.

To declare an offer of fifty gold coins so brazenly, you're probably the only one in the entire market.

"I apologize, but I'll have to turn down your offer..."

Recovering from his shock, the owner hurriedly shook his hands.

He'd thought that the other party was some rich gongzi, young master, or something similar. In the end, he turned out to be just some poor bloke.

To think that he had wasted so much time on the other party.

"Do you think that my price isn't high enough?" Zhang Xuan didn't get angry. Instead, he smiled calmly in response.

The vendor fell speechless.

This was no longer a problem of whether the price was too low or not, but that the offer was as good as offering nothing!

Have you ever seen anyone holding a stalk of grass to purchase anything?

"Appraiser Liu Chang, I'll be selling this item to you then. May I know if there's anything you're interested in as well? I'll wrap it up for you together..."

Having lost his patience for the countryside bumpkin, the vendor turned his attention to Liu Chang.

"Does that mean that you aren't going to sell it to me?"

Zhang Xuan shook his head and a look of pity flashed across his face. "Sigh, I was thinking that I could solve your insomnia and nightmares if you'd sold the item to me. Since you aren't interested, let's forget about it then!"

After leaving behind these words, Zhang Xuan placed the scale back in place, turned around, and prepared to leave.

"What did you say?"

The vendor had intended to ignore Zhang Xuan regardless of

what he said, but upon hearing those words, his body immediately stiffened and his face turned pale, "Friend, please wait a moment!"

To cultivate was to go against heaven, forcibly absorbing the spiritual energy from environment to nourish oneself. Under normal circumstances, it was rare for one to suffer from insomnia and nightmares. But for some reason, for the past half a year, he found himself unable to fall asleep, and even if he managed to doze off, he would immediately be jolted awake.

If it was just a day or two, he would still be fine with it. Yet, it continued on consecutively for half a year. Despite his powerful cultivation, his mind was already reaching its limit.

Privately, he had consulted many physicians but they were all powerless against it. Yet, the person before him had pointed out his problem and offered to give him a solution to it. How could he not feel agitated?

"Recently, do you find yourself being jolted awake frequently, sweating profusely whenever it happens? Also, when you fall asleep, does your body convulse slightly?" Knowing that the other party would definitely stop him, Zhang Xuan smiled and turned around.

"You... how did you know?" The vendor's body trembled in shock.

Due to being unable to sleep, even though he could make up for his lack of rest through cultivating day and night, his face was still

unnaturally pale.

Most physicians could tell that much, but... Waking up sweating profusely and convulsing in his sleep, these were symptoms that only he knew of. He hadn't told anyone about it before, not even his wife.

How did the other party learn of it? And to even point it out directly.

"I can solve your problem!" Zhang Xuan said calmly.

"Solve my problem?"

The vendor's body trembled in agitation, unable to believe that he would be freed from his agony.

"You are free to choose whether to believe my words or not, but... this is the only chance you're going to get. If you don't solve it soon, your lifespan will take a toll and you won't live for much longer!"

With his hands behind his back, Zhang Xuan spoke indifferently.

Even though Zhang Xuan wanted the Dragon Scale Amulet, he needed the other party to place his trust in him first. Otherwise, it would be futile no matter how much he spoke.

"I..." The vendor hesitated.

After a moment, he gritted his teeth, turned to the middle-aged man and said, "I apologize, Appraiser Liu Chang, but it seems like I can't sell this item to you anymore..."

Money was important, but what could be more valuable than one's life?

For the past half a year, plagued by this affliction, he had spent more than fifty spirit stones on consulting physicians but it was to no avail.

If the person before him could truly solve his affliction, then he didn't mind giving the artifact away to him.

As for whether he should believe the other party or not... Just by how the other party was able to determine the symptom of his affliction, his eye of discernment was already superior to the physicians he had consulted before. Perhaps... the other party might really be able to solve his affliction.

"Hmph, there are many untrustworthy fellows loitering around the markets nowadays. You should be careful!"

Not expecting his fifty spirit stones to lose out to the other party's fifty gold coins, Appraiser Liu Chang turned to Zhang Xuan and stared at him with narrowed eyes.

"I don't think that it's a concern of Appraiser Liu whether I am trustworthy or not!" Zhang Xuan waved his hands casually.

"Hmph, very well..."

With an awful complexion, Appraiser Liu Chang flung his sleeves and left.

It would be humiliating if a well-respected appraiser like him were to cause trouble just because he couldn't buy an item.

But of course, that was if he didn't know the value of the artifact he had just missed.

He had only wanted to buy it due to his curiosity after finding himself unable to identify the artifact.

In truth, he didn't really think that it was a huge loss just because he'd failed to obtain it.

Even so, to be outdone by a countryside bumpkin despite putting in so much money, he still felt a little enraged.

"Friend..."

Upon seeing Appraiser Liu leaving with a displeased expression, the vendor turned to Zhang Xuan.

If that fellow had truly been speaking just for the sake of it and was unable to solve his affliction, he really might burst into tears.

Offending a 2-star appraiser in this market was truly an unwise move.

"Don't worry, since I'm able to see through your affliction, I'll surely cure you of it. Show me your punching routine!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Yes!" Without much hesitation, the vendor began executing his fist art, causing a huge gust of wind to blow.

To think that even an ordinary vendor's cultivation would reach Half-Zongshi, as expected of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance.

With sufficient resources and master teachers, its overall strength was innumerable times above that of Tianxuan Kingdom.

"Alright, that's enough!" Zhang Xuan waved his hands casually.

As the other party's cultivation was far beneath him, Zhang Xuan was able to see through most of his problem through his Eye of Insight. Even so, if he wanted to cure him completely, he needed the help of the Library of Heaven's Path to determine the root of the illness.

"You've quite a few valuable objects on you, but if I'm not wrong... you obtained them through depraved means. The objects

have an ancient tone to them, and there's a slight green shade to their surface. This is caused by a lack of air ventilation. On top of that, an aura of death is exuding from you... If I'm not mistaken, your expertise is digging graves!"

Walking up to the vendor, Zhang Xuan looked around before speaking nonchalantly.

"Yo-you..." The vendor's face paled, and he nearly fell to the floor in fright.

Digging graves was a nicer way to put it. In truth, he was a grave robber.

No matter how powerful an expert was, regardless of whether he reached Zhizun realm or Transcendent Mortal realm, it was impossible for him to escape the sands of time. Eventually, all would be swept away by the river of history. After their deaths, these people would be buried in a tomb along with their most prized possessions.

And it was exactly through digging these places and selling the artifacts of the dead that the vendor's business could grow to such a scale.

However, he had hidden this fact well. Many of his close friends weren't aware of it. Thus, having his main trade being exposed by Zhang Xuan left him light-headed, and he nearly fainted from shock.

"You don't need to worry, I've no interest in your business!"

Chuckling softly, Zhang Xuan continued, "I'm just talking about the origin of your affliction.

"If you'd only dug up ordinary tombs, there wouldn't be any problems at all. However, eight months ago, you dug up the grave of a Transcendent Mortal. Am I mistaken?" Zhang Xuan looked over.

"This... No, you aren't!" The vendor clenched his jaws.

"Unfortunately for you, that Transcendent Mortal was betrayed by his wife and killed by his good friend, causing his resentment to linger in the world even after his death... If my judgement doesn't fail me, you must have taken a personal possession of his and carried it along with you." Zhang Xuan continued asking.

"... Yes!" The vendor nodded his head as he stared at that the fellow before him as though he had seen a ghost.

The other party's tomb was shabby and there was nothing of value there except for a personal amulet. Since it seemed as though it was at least worth something, he'd taken it along with him... How did this fellow know about something so private?

On top of that, to describe it so clearly as though he had seen it himself?

"It's precisely due to the resentment contained within this object that you found yourself suffering from insomnia and convulsions when you finally fall asleep... It's actually not too difficult for you to solve your problem. You just have to return to the tomb, pay respects to the owner, return the amulet, and treat his descendants well. If so, your affliction should disappear!" Zhang Xuan stated.

In truth, the affliction this vendor was suffering from was kind of similar to that of Apothecary Chen Xiao back then.

The latter took possession of an apothecary's cauldron while disregarding his promise toward the other party. As a result, he was cursed.

On the other hand, this vendor had been plagued with the resentment of a Transcendent Mortal expert for a long period of time. It would've been bizarre if there hadn't been anything wrong with him!

If he didn't resolve the issue soon, his longevity would definitely be reduced significantly. Most probably, in less than a few years, just as with Apothecary Chen Xiao back then, the aura of death would shroud him, claiming his vitality.

Zhang Xuan's words from before claiming that the other party wouldn't live for long wasn't just fear mongering.

"Master, thank you for your guidance!"

Given how the other party's analysis was spot-on, the vendor already felt significant trust toward Zhang Xuan's words, and he was filled with gratitude for him.

All along, he thought that it was a problem with his body. Never in his dreams could he have imagined that it would be due to this.

"This item... Master, please take it!"

Upon learning the method to curing his affliction, the vendor immediately passed the Dragon Scale Protective Amulet over.

He had no idea what use this artifact had, but no matter of how expensive it was, he didn't think that it could be more valuable than his life. In a sense, he had profited from this deal.

Zhang Xuan nodded his head and kept the amulet. Then, with a flick of his wrist, he took out a pile of gold coins. There were precisely fifty of them in the stack. "Here is your money!"

"There's no need for it..."

The vendor shook his hands, turning down the payment.

Rather than taking this measly sum of money, he might as well just give the amulet away. At the very least, he could win the goodwill of the other party in this way.

"Why is there no need for it? Since we've agreed on the price, if I don't pay you, wouldn't it be no different from robbery?" Zhang Xuan spoke righteously.

"This... Alright then!" Left with no choice, the vendor could only accept Zhang Xuan's payment.

"This works as well?"

Taking the entire happening into sight, Zhao Feiwu felt as though her understanding of the world was being overturned.

Buying a treasure worth fifty spirit stones for fifty gold coin, and for the seller to even thank the buyer for it...

That was way too incredible!

As the daughter of the alliance head of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, the princess of an empire... She had seen many formidable physicians, but to tell that someone was sick and even deduce that the other party was a grave robber...

You aren't a physician at all...

You must be a fortune teller instead...

Chapter 451: Spirit Calming Grass

Having bought the Dragon Scale Protective Amulet for fifty gold coins, Zhang Xuan bade the vendor farewell in satisfaction.

There was no one in the world who was completely healthy, and demanding compensation for treatment wasn't anything much.

Even if one was truly healthy, one would at least want to raise one's cultivation. Considering how even a 4-star master teacher wasn't capable of making a person achieve a breakthrough with just a short moment of guidance, Zhang Xuan's guidance was more than sufficient to replace a Tutelage Jade Token.

Even without money, Zhang Xuan was confident that he could buy this artifact for sure. Thus, he wasn't worried at all.

After walking around the market for a while longer, the group realized that there was nothing else of value left here. Thus, Zhao Feiwu said, "Let's go up and take a look. The treasures on the second floor are much more valuable than those of the first floor, and most of them have already been verified by appraisers!"

As such, the crowd headed up the stairs.

The second floor wasn't as chaotic as the first floor, where booths and shouting vendors filled the entire venue. The scale of the second floor was much smaller, and there were various stores in the area. The objects on display were clearly much more valuable than those on the first floor.

If what was sold on the first floor could be considered as miscellaneous goods, then those on the second floor could be considered as true treasures.

All the stores here had at least a hundred years of history to them, and regardless of whether it was their reputation or the goods that were on sale in their shops, they were much better than the booths on the first floor. Hung at the front of each store were all kinds of plaques, such as 'Master Mo Xiu's Appraised Treasures', 'Master Sun Xiang's Appraised Treasures', 'Master Hong Li's Appraised Treasures'...

All kinds of different goods were displayed in each store.

Even though these stores weren't large and the items inside weren't as many as the booths below, just the fact that it carried the name of the appraisers attracted the gazes of many, making them even more popular than the booths below.

"The largest store on the second floor is [First Class Pavilion], which is right in front of us. The items they sell, just like their name, are all top grade. Even though it isn't operated by an appraiser, it's the most bustling store here. In fact, appraisers also frequent there personally to trade for some treasures!" Jin Conghai said.

He had been here before so he knew quite a bit about this place.

As for Zhao Feiwu, she only knew about this location from some

books so she wasn't too sure about the details.

"Let's go over and take a look!"

The primary objective of Zhang Xuan's trip here was the Soulless Metal Humanoid, so he wasn't really interested in the other miscellaneous stuff. However, since the supposed First Class Pavilion was right before them, it wouldn't hurt to take a look. Besides, he could also try asking about the Metal Humanoid there.

Walking past row after row of stores, it didn't take long before they stopped by a vast space with three gold words written on it. With just a look, Zhang Xuan could tell that the calligraphy had reached an extremely high level of artistic conception.

"To think that it would be an art piece of the fifth level!"

Zhang Xuan eyes couldn't help but light up.

He was a 3-star painter so he had an in-depth knowledge of calligraphy and painting.

The three large words 'First Class Pavilion' might seem simple on the surface, but the words were written with forceful and flowy strokes, giving a feeling as though the words would leap out at any moment just like an ascending flood dragon. It was clear that the words were anything but simple, and it had already reached the fifth level of painting.

At this kind of level, the words had already reached the level of Spirit Creation. Even if one were to look at it for an extended period of time, not only would one not feel fatigued, one would even feel refreshed and revitalized.

Just these three words were probably worth a huge fortune already.

As expected of the number one store in the Appraiser Hall, its scale sure wasn't anything that the other stores could match up to.

Walking into the store, Zhang Xuan saw several people strolling about the displays. Some of the customers dressed in appraiser robes were staring fixedly at the treasures before them with a tranced look.

All occupations were enjoyable when one could immerse oneself into it; appraising was the same as well.

Some of the most exquisite masterpieces were at a quality such that even the greatest craftsmen and blacksmiths could only create one in their entire lives. It was practically impossible to replicate it, and these were the treasures that left countless appraisers awed when they examined them.

"Welcome, may I know what you are looking for? I can guide you around if you need!" offered an attendant as he walked over.

"There's no need for that, we'll just take a casual look!"

Zhang Xuan shook his hands.

Then, he walked over to the various treasures displayed on the shelves.

They were indeed much more valuable than the artifacts seen below. All of the items carried a powerful aura, and they seemed to resonate with the spiritual energy in the air. Even without the Eye of Insight, it was apparent with a look that they were of great value.

Upon seeing that Zhang Xuan's gaze was on a chi (33.3cm) large cauldron, the attendant immediately walked forward and introduced, "This is the Divine Copper Cauldron. If you were to put spirit stones inside, it would automatically refine and cleanse it, making it easier to absorb the spiritual energy within it! Using this object, your speed of cultivation can be heightened by ten percent!"

"As for this, it's the Nine Dragons Cauldron. Every single mouth of the cauldron harnesses a surge of sword qi, making it a formidable weapon when it's activated. Even a Zongshi realm pinnacle expert would be killed swiftly before it..."

Upon hearing the introduction, Zhang Xuan nodded his head in awe,

Honestly speaking, all of these items were truly worthy of being classified as treasures. If placed in any of the Tier 1 Kingdoms, it

could become a national weapon to deter aggressors.

But after taking a look at the price, Zhang Xuan couldn't help but smile bitterly.

None of these items were cheap. Putting everything aside, just the Divine Copper Cauldron was already worth two hundred spirit stones, and the Nine Dragons Cauldron was priced at three hundred and twenty spirit stones!

Even a Tier 1 Kingdom would be unable to fork out such a sum. Even if it was Xuanyuan Kingdom, its finances would probably suffer greatly for many years if it were to purchase it.

"This is the appraisal authentication certificate?"

Regardless of whether it was the Divine Copper Cauldron of the Nine Dragons Cauldron, there was a carved jade at its bottom which detailed the name of an appraiser, his evaluation, as well as his signature.

"Yes, most of the treasures of our First Class Pavilion will go through the hands of appraisers to have them authenticated. We will never deceive our customers!" the attendant said proudly.

"Un!"

Zhang Xuan nodded his head. Then, with a thought, lines of insight appeared in his eyes.

Eye of Insight.

He wanted to see if there was any treasure beyond his current means here.

It didn't take him long to scan through the artifacts in the room, and in the end, he simply shook his head.

There were many valuable treasures here, but there was nothing beyond him like the Dragon Scale Protective Amulet from before.

"Teacher, Appraiser Liu Chang..."

Just as Zhang Xuan was looking around to see if there were any treasures he had missed, Yuan Tao exclaimed in shock.

Following the direction of Yuan Tao's finger, Zhang Xuan saw a familiar figure.

It was the person who competed with him over the Dragon Scale Protective Amulet previously.

At this moment, his haughtiness and aura of superiority had disappeared. He followed behind an elder with a respectful look just like a humble student.

The elder was in his fifties, and he had an authoritative

disposition to him. With a single glance, it was clear that he was a person who had been on a powerful position for a long period of time.

Right in front of the duo was an average-sized plant with a purple flower on top.

Amidst the petals, faint yellow veins could be seen, and it exuded a faint fragrance which left one in a tranquil state upon being breathed in.

On top of treasures, the First Class Pavilion also dealt in some of the rarer medicinal herbs.

"Ashen stems, slightly yellow leaves, petals divided by yellow veins... Could this be [Spirit Calming Grass]?" after a moment of hesitation, Zhao Feiwu asked.

"This gongzi indeed has good eyes. That's indeed Spirit Calming Grass. This is the only stalk within the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance, and our First Class Pavilion bought it at an exorbitant price. It's said to be exceptionally useful in nourishing one's soul, and rumor has it that it can even wake a dormant soul!"

The attendant chuckled.

"Wake a dormant soul?" Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up, and unknowingly, his fists clenched tightly together.

Chapter 452: Purchasing a Herb at an Inexpensive Price (1)

However, he quickly shook his head with a bitter smile.

Zhang Xuan had stumbled across the Spirit Calming Grass in one of the books he had read, and its main function was to calm one's spirit, allowing one to enter the state of Heart of Tranquil Water more easily. It didn't have the effect of waking a dormant soul.

Otherwise, given Zhang Xuan's understanding of herbs, he wouldn't be at a loss over the matter.

"Wake a person's soul? That's impossible!"

Zhao Feiwu frowned.

She had read many books regarding medicinal herbs as well, and she knew that the effects of this herb weren't as exaggerated as the attendant put it out to be.

"Normal Spirit Calming Grass indeed doesn't have that effect, but this one is different. It's the Emperor Spirit Calming Grass, and it grows by consuming the spiritual energy within spirit stones. As such, its properties have been enhanced to the point that it's highly effective even for Transcendent Mortal experts."

Upon speaking of this stalk of grass, the attendant's eyes began to

glow.

"Consuming spiritual energy within spirit stones? It's fed using spirit stones?"

"Correct. From its germination, it's placed within a unique formation which extracts the purest spiritual energy contained within a spirit stone to provide the required energy for the Spirit Calming Grass's growth... And to grow to such a size, this Spirit Calming Grass has probably consumed over a hundred pieces of spirit stones. Considering the manpower and resources required to groom this herb, it's definitely an invaluable treasure!" the attendant explained.

Zhang Xuan was taken aback, "A hundred spirit stones just to groom a stalk of grass?"

Even Zhang Xuan had yet to expend so many spirit stones in his cultivation.

To think that a single stalk of grass would be treated even better than him. It was truly the case of a human being beneath a stalk of grass.

"Indeed. Due to the great care showered upon it during its growth, its property has been enhanced greatly, granting it immense effects on one's soul!" the attendant said.

Even though Zhang Xuan was surprised, he didn't take the

attendant's words at face value. Instead, he activated his Eye of Insight and took a closer look.

He had to determine for himself whether this stalk of grass was truly effective on dormant souls.

Soon, his eyes lit up.

Even though the medicinal herb was expensive, it wasn't beyond Zhang Xuan's current cultivation realm yet. According to the information reflected in the Eye of Insight... it was really useful toward dormant souls!

However, unlike what the attendant said, it couldn't wake dormant souls. Instead, it simply stabilized it, preventing it from dissipating.

Even though dormant souls were known to be souls that were sleeping, in truth, they were just too weak to be woken up.

It was just like how a severely ill patient was too weak to get up from his bed.

The great impact that Lu Chong's body suffered back then had caused his soul to dissipate. Even though Zhang Xuan had saved him swiftly, the other party still suffered great damage, and the strength of his soul was less than a hundredth of what it was previously. As such, it was unable to sustain the functions of his body, resulting in his coma.

Even though this Spirit Calming Grass didn't have the ability to wake Lu Chong up, it could stabilize his soul and even strengthen it slowly.

"I must get it!"

Zhang Xuan had no idea how he could wake Lu Chong up at this point, but one thing he was certain was that he couldn't allow his soul to grow weaker and weaker.

Since he had stumbled across this Spirit Calming Grass, he mustn't allow it to pass him by.

After a moment of hesitation, Zhang Xuan turned to the attendant and asked, "This... How much does it cost?"

"This stalk of Spirit Calming Grass is one of the most expensive treasures in our First Class Pavilion. It's priced at five hundred spirit stones!" the attendant said.

"Five hundred?" Zhang Xuan's body shook.

He couldn't even take out five spirit stones at the moment, not to mention, five hundred...

You must be jesting!

Will you accept my five hundred gold coins instead?

Appraiser Hall... Why don't you call it Daylight Robbery Hall instead? Given how expensive every single one of your items are, how in the world do you expect others to buy it?

Surely there are very few customers who can afford that sum...

Just as Zhang Xuan was considering how he could lower the price to five hundred gold coins and take it down, a deep voice sounded in front of him, "Alright, I'll be taking that Spirit Calming Grass. Also, help me wrap up the Verdant Bamboo, Deep Accruing Grass, Yinyang Umbrella... that I've just browsed through as well!"

Lifting his head, Zhang Xuan saw that the one who had just spoken was the elder who came in along with Appraiser Liu Chang.

It seemed as though in the other party's view, five hundred spirit stones were no different from five hundred gold coins.

"Sure!"

Upon hearing the other party's words, the attendant serving the elder hurriedly took the various items that the elder pointed out excitedly.

The more the customer buys, the greater the commission of the attendant.

"I apologize but it's already sold... Customer, why don't you continue browsing around to see if there's anything that would interest you?"

The attendant who tagged along with Zhang Xuan shook his head in disappointment upon seeing that the Spirit Calming Grass had been taken away.

"There's no need for me to look any further, I want this herb..."

There was nothing else in this store that caught Zhang Xuan's eyes. As such, he walked forward and said, "Wait a moment!"

"It can't be that you're still interested in the Spirit Calming Herb?"

Seeing Zhang Xuan rushing forward and shouting 'wait a moment', the attendant beside him leaped in fright.

The other party had already said that he was taking it, if you were to insist on taking it away at this point, it'll be no different from theft... But more importantly, do you know who the other party is?

To rush over despite not knowing who the other party is, aren't you being too reckless?

Zhang Xuan's voice was bright and clear, and he immediately caught the notice of the elder and the others around him. Upon seeing Zhang Xuan, Appraiser Liu Chang began glaring at the other party.

He had just attempted to claim the item that the other party was buying. Could the other party be holding a grudge, so he wanted to do the same as well?

"What are you up to?"

Thus, Appraiser Liu Chang stepped in front and blocked Zhang Xuan's path.

Since he couldn't be bothered with Appraiser Liu Chang, Zhang Xuan turned to the elder and said, "I want this Spirit Calming Grass."

"We've already set our eyes on this herb, you should look for other items to buy!" Appraiser Liu Chang waved his hands.

"Even though you have set your eyes on it, you haven't paid for it yet, right? It's only natural for the good to go to the highest bidder. As long as the price I offer is higher than yours, I should be able to take it." Zhang Xuan replied Appraiser Liu Chang calmly.

"You..." Appraiser Liu Chang's chest rose and fell rapidly, and he nearly erupted on the spot.

Those words were extremely familiar to him; it was exactly what he said to the other party just a moment ago.

It seemed like this fellow was really here to cause trouble.

Otherwise, how could their words be identical?

Zhao Feiwu and Jin Conghai exchanged glances and smiled bitterly.

Zhang Xuan indeed wasn't one to let anyone who crossed him get away easily.

However, the elder didn't look like someone who lacked money. It would be no easy feat to purchase the item he had set his eyes upon!

"What is your offer then? Just to let you know, we're purchasing this Spirit Calming Grass for five hundred spirit stones!" Suppressing his fury, Appraiser Liu Chang harrumphed.

The fellow before had to hesitate even before a measly sum of fifteen spirit stones, so it was almost certain that he didn't have much money. To outbid them on this medicinal herb and take it away was surely impossible for him.

"Can you give this Spirit Calming Grass away to me?" Zhang Xuan turned to the elder and asked.

Even though Appraiser Liu Chang's standing was high, he acted subserviently before this elder. From this, it could be seen that the standing of the elder was far superior to Appraiser Liu Chang.

Also, the one who was buying the Spirit Calming Grass was the elder, so Appraiser Liu Chang probably had no say in this matter.

Since he had no say, what was the point of wasting time with him?

"I..."

Upon being ignored, Appraiser Liu Chang's face flushed bright red.

The elder had been watching the argument of the duo, and with his hands behind his back, he replied impassively, "He's my student so he has a say in whether I'll sell this medicinal herb or not. However, I do have a use for this medicinal herb and I don't wish to part with it. Thus, it doesn't matter how high a price you offer!"

"Student?"

Given that Appraiser Liu Chang was a 2-star appraiser, his teacher must be at least a 3-star or even 4-star appraiser.

It was no wonder that he could buy a stalk of medicinal herb priced at five hundred spirit stones so easily.

"Doesn't matter how high a price I offer? That might not necessarily be the case!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Oh? Why don't you tell me your offer then?"

The elder looked at Zhang Xuan in interest.

The attendants spectating the commotion were also filled with curiosity.

That young man might be unaware of who the elder was, but they were extremely clear about his identity. Even if this elder wasn't the richest man in Honghai City, he wasn't too far away from it.

Even if one could offer up something that interested this elder, it would probably have an astronomical price.

Zhao Feiwu and the others were also intrigued and curious.

This fellow had bought the Dragon Scale Protective Amulet previously through his medical skills, so until now, they had no idea how much wealth this young man possessed. Since he was determined to buy this Spirit Calming Grass, he should at least take out a portion of his fortune now.

After all, without real money, the First Class Pavilion wouldn't sell something worth five hundred spirit stones to him.

Even if Zhang Xuan intended to talk his way out of it, these attendants weren't qualified to make the decision.

After all, such a sum of money was way beyond them as well.

Just as everyone was perplexed over this matter, curious to see what Zhang Xuan would do next, the young man in question declared confidently.

"I can offer five hundred gold coins!"

Pu!

Appraiser Liu Chang nearly spurted a mouthful of blood and fainted on the spot.

This again?

Is there even a point to be doing this?

When I offered fifty spirit stones to buy down that bizarre object, you offered fifty gold coins in exchange. This time, for such a valuable Spirit Calming Grass, you intend to use the same method as well...

Can we start conversing properly?

The mouths of the attendants watching the commotion also twitched violently.

The young man had spoken so confidently so they thought that he would offer a huge sum of money. In the end, to offer five hundred gold coins... You're here to cause trouble, right?

The attendant who had been waiting on Zhang Xuan ever since his entry felt so embarrassed that he wanted to find a pit to bury himself in.

He thought that Zhang Xuan would really be able to offer a price that no one could match up with, but to think that it was this...

Cough cough.

Even if you don't have sufficient money, you shouldn't offer something that can't even buy you a handful of dirt.

Just as the crowd was about to faint from the ridiculousness of the situation, Zhao Feiwu slapped her forehead and said, "Elder Jin, prepare to make a move. I'm afraid that if we don't protect him, he might end up being... pummeled to death!"

"Yes!" Jin Conghai nodded as he secretly propelled the zhenqi in

his body, preparing himself to make a move at any moment.

He shared the same sentiments as 'gongzi'.

This elder was clearly of high standing, and to provoke such a person as well, Zhang Xuan was truly arrogant. In fact, he found it a miracle that the other party could survive until now given his character.

"Purchasing a Spirit Calming Grass for five hundred gold coins?"

As expected, the elder's face immediately darkened. His aura began gushing out like a gigantic torrent. Even though it was hard to gauge his cultivation realm, his strength didn't seem to pale to Jin Conghai in any way.

Most probably, the other party had at least reached Transcendent Mortal 3-dan.

"Indeed!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

Seeing how the other party admitted to it so candidly without the slightest hint of embarrassment, the elder harrumphed, "Do you think that the First Class Pavilion would reject an offer of five hundred spirit stones and sell such a valuable herb to you for five hundred gold coins instead? Who do you think you are? Do you think that you are the lord of Honghai City or the head of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance?"

"I am neither of the two, I'm just someone who's interested in buying the Spirit Calming Grass."

Zhang Xuan shook his head calmly, "Besides, I intend to buy it from you instead of the First Class Pavilion! I believe that you'll definitely sell it to me for five hundred gold coins!"

"Buy it from me?"

The elder flew into a frenzy, and his facial muscles convulsed violently.

How can you be so sure that I'll be so cheap as to sell a medicinal herb worth five hundred spirit stones to you for five hundred gold coins?

You must be dreaming!

Chapter 453: Purchasing a Herb at an Inexpensive Price (2)

Even though he was rich, it didn't come from nowhere.

Naturally, he wouldn't be so foolish as to sell an item he bought for five hundred spirit stones for five hundred gold coins.

Was there something wrong with this fellow's head? Otherwise, how could one speak such foolish words?"

Turning his head to look at the young man, he saw the other party nodding his head with a smile, "Indeed!"

"Are you done yet? Do you know who my teacher is? How dare you speak such arrogant words here!"

Seeing how the other party was going overboard as to even provoke his teacher, Appraiser Liu Chang couldn't hold himself back anymore and stepped forward.

"Who your teacher is? Given his sharp eyes that could determine the crux of an artifact with a single glance, if I'm not mistaken... he must be an appraiser!"

Zhang Xuan glanced at Appraiser Liu Chang.

"It's good that you know that much. My teacher is..."

Liu Chang was just about to introduce his teacher's identity when the elder interrupted, "Alright, since you know that I'm an appraiser, you should know that I've no lack of money. Thus, you should know that it's impossible for me to sell something that I've already bought!"

He finally understood that that the fellow must have something wrong with his head. As he couldn't be bothered with to argue with a psycho, he turned to his attendant and said, "Wrap these items up for me and sent them over to my residence!"

"Yes!" The attendant nodded.

Before long, several stalks of herbs and artifacts were brought to one side to be packed.

Zhao Ya and the others sneaked a glance over and they were astounded.

Even though the elder didn't buy much, every single one of the item was exceptionally expensive. None of their prices were below three hundred spirit stones.

The total cost had already exceeded two thousand spirit stones. To spend so much money in one go without the slightest hesitation, the elder's wealth was indeed astonishing.

Facing such a person, their teacher actually offered to purchase a

herb worth five hundred spirit stones for five hundred gold coins...

Wasn't that going a little too far?

Staring at their teacher doubtfully to see what he would do next, they only saw him placing his hands behind his back and shaking his head with a look of pity.

"Sigh, I thought that an appraiser would at least be a little sharper when purchasing something. To think that you would spend such a huge sum of money just to take away a fake. Your preferences... are indeed hard to understand!"

There was a hint of lamentation to his tone, as though disappointed by the other party's actions.

"Fake? Do you know who my teacher is? How dare you spout nonsense here..."

Appraiser Liu Chang thought that the other party would tone it down after his teacher had spared him. Yet, the other party still went on to utter such words. Liu Chang's face immediately darkened.

Are you done yet?

My teacher chose to let you off, and yet you still dare to say that he bought a fake. Are you seeking death?

"Sigh!" Zhang Xuan was completely unconcerned with the other party's reprimand and simply sighed once more. Shaking his head, he continued, "It's one thing for one's eyes to be bad, but to refuse to admit to it as well..."

"More importantly, you still claim to be some incredible figure, how humiliating. Forget it, since you're unwilling to listen to my advice and insist on buying a fake, I won't be nosey then. Let's go!"

After finishing his piece, Zhang Xuan prepared to leave with Zhao Ya and the others.

"Hold it right there! Who did you say is buying a fake? If you don't clarify yourself right now, don't even think of leaving..." Seeing how the other party was hinting at his teacher buying a fake and shamelessly denying the matter, Appraiser Liu Chang couldn't hold himself back any longer and immediately stepped forward.

At the same time, his aura gushed out. Zhenqi drove through his body, granting him immense strength.

Transcendent Mortal 1-dan Prolonged Longevity realm!

Even though he was at the same realm as Ding Hong, he was a cultivator of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance and was entitled to significantly greater resources than the latter, and as such, he was much stronger as well.

If he were to make a move, Zhang Xuan would probably find it hard to withstand his might.

Even so, Zhang Xuan remained completely nonchalant to the immense might the other party was exuding. Instead, he glanced at the other party disdainfully and said, "Why? Not only do you have bad vision, causing you to be unable to discern a fake good, you're also attempting to silence those who advised you out of goodwill?"

Zhang Xuan had encountered many of such situations as Yang Xuan. Without such confidence, he wouldn't have been able to fool others with his act.

"Bad vision? Do you know who my teacher is? There are countless people in Honghai City who are begging my teacher to spare a glance at their artifacts..."

With a face reddened in anger, Liu Chang lashed out. However, halfway through his words, the elder walked over.

"Enough!"

Waving his hands casually to stop Liu Chang, the elder turned to Zhang Xuan and said, "You said that I've bought a fake, so may I know which one is it? Do you have any proof of it?"

Even though the elder had asked an extremely ordinary question, his tone carried deep confidence, exerting a huge pressure on

Zhang Xuan. It felt as though as long as Zhang Xuan were to misspeak, he would immediately be punished.

"Proof? Are you sure you want to know?"

Zhang Xuan smiled.

"If your reasoning is sound and you have evidence of the matter, I'll admit to my vision being bad! However, if it ends up that you're only spouting rubbish to gain the attention of others, I can overlook it but... I'm afraid that Liu Chang might not share my sentiments!"

The elder's tone was filled with authority.

As an appraiser, being accused of making a flawed judgement was a huge matter. If the other party was truly speaking nonsense, even if he didn't make a move, his student, Liu Chang, also wouldn't let the other party off.

"This fellow sure knows how to cause trouble..."

Taking all of these into sight, Zhao Feiwu rolled her eyes.

In her view, if Zhang Xuan really wanted the Spirit Calming Grass, he should just take out the money required for it. To make an enemy out of such a powerful figure for this was the most foolish decision one could make.

Why must he cause trouble wherever he goes? Couldn't he learn how to stay still?

If only he was willing to take out the money, wouldn't the matter be solved easily?

If Zhang Xuan were to learn of the other party's thoughts, he would definitely burst into tears.

You are the daughter of the Alliance Head, the princess of the empire. It's easy for you to say those words since you don't lack money. If I had the money too, do you think that I'd be so bored as to put my life at risk just to act cool...

...

"Spouting rubbish to gain the attention of others? You're thinking too much into it!"

Shaking his head, Zhang Xuan stepped forward and pointed at the pile of objects that the elder had just bought. "This Verdant Bamboo is something that you have just bought, right?"

"Indeed. Teacher spent three hundred spirit stones on buying this Verdant Bamboo. Just to let you know, it's the only one you'll find in the entire Honghai City!" Liu Chang sneered coldly. "Why, do you think that there's a problem with it?"

The item was right there and there was a label beneath it. There was nothing to deny about it.

Besides, Liu Chang didn't think that there was a problem with this object either. He had also taken a close look at that item and verified that there was no problem with it.

Ignoring the other party's words, Zhang Xuan circled around the bamboo, touched it with the tip of his finger, and as though having confirmed something, he smiled and asked, "May I know what the properties of the Verdant Bamboo are and what do you intend to do with this medicinal herb?"

"The Verdant Bamboo is a unique spirit medicine. Its leaves are the main ingredient to forging [Verdant Crystalline Pills]. This pill can nurture a Heart of Crystal within one to dispel one's inner demons, thus putting one in a state of calmness. It's exceptionally useful to Transcendent Mortal 3-dan Yin-Yang realm experts.

"As for the stem, it's extremely tough and it can be used to forge the Spirit weapons [Verdant Bow] and [Piercing Arrows]. The Verdant Bow is a Spirit low-tier weapon, and when paired with the Piercing Arrows, it can easily pierce through one's body. Due to the extreme speed of arrow when the two are paired together, it's capable of killing one without even leaving behind a wound. It's one of the weapons that Transcendent Mortal experts are willing to fork out an exorbitant sum to buy.

"And of course, it has one last method of utilization; it can be used as a formation core. However, this property is significantly weaker than the former two and it's not worth mentioning at all!"

Stroking his beard, the elderly spoke impassively.

His composed voice was tinged with confidence as he revealed his broad knowledge on the matter.

Most people knew that the Verdant Bamboo was valuable but very few were aware of its uses. It was only because of his identity as an appraiser that he knew a thing or two about it. Otherwise, he wouldn't have spent a hulking sum of three hundred spirit stones to purchase it.

"Indeed, most people only know that the leaves of the Verdant Bamboo can be forged into a pill. Very few know that it can be forged into a bow, arrow and serve as a formation core as well. It's impressive that you know all of these!"

After praising the other party, Zhang Xuan's lips curled up and he continued on, "Since you know the various functions of the Verdant Bamboo, may I know if you're using it to lay out a formation, forge a bow and arrows, or forge a pill?"

Given that the stem and the leaves came from the same origin, the medicinal properties of the leaves could be best brought out if the stem was used as fuel for the pill forging process.

On the other hand, for the forging of the bow and arrow, the Verdant Bamboo would have to be nourished in a unique medicinal fluid when it's still in its freshest state. However, if one were to do so, the leaves would be mixed in with impurities, rendering it

useless.

And similarly, if the Verdant Bamboo was used as a formation core, one would have to carve inscriptions on it. This would damage the leaves and bamboos, rendering it unusable for any other purpose.

Thus, even though the Verdant Bamboo had three uses to it, one could only choose one of it for each bamboo. If one attempted to be ambitious and use a single bamboo for multiple purpose, one might potentially end up simply wasting the bamboo instead.

"Of course it's for pill forging! Even though it isn't too bad to use it for the other purposes, the Verdant Crystalline Pill is still the most valuable of the three!"

A deep frown appeared on the elder's face. He had no idea what Zhang Xuan was up to, but even so, he still answered his question patiently.

The Verdant Crystalline Pill was a nourishment that was useful to even a Transcendent Mortal 3-dan Yin-Yang realm expert. Every single pill could fetch an astronomical sum; this wasn't something that the Verdant Bow or the formation could match up with.

If one wanted to maximize one's profit from the Verdant Bamboo, one should definitely choose to forge the most valuable Verdant Crystalline Pill.

After receiving the answer to his question, Zhang Xuan declared, "Since you're intending to forge Verdant Crystalline Pills, I can tell you upright that what you bought is a fake!"

"Fake? The Verdant Bamboo has a smooth green body, reminiscent of jade. There is a huge gap in between its leaves, and even the sharp edge of a blade cannot wound it. On every single division, there are three leaves, and each leaf has seven veins on it..."

This time, it was Liu Chang who replied. He swiftly stated dozens of ways to appraise the authenticity of a Verdant Bamboo, and every single point that he mentioned matched the properties of the bamboo in his hand. "This is the way to ascertain the authenticity of a Verdant Bamboo. Even I can easily tell that it's definitely an authentic good, and yet you're saying that it's a fake? Fine, if this is a fake, why don't you tell me what's wrong with it?"

"Your method of appraising is indeed correct!" Zhang Xuan nodded with a smile, not refuting the other party's words at all.

"Ah? Since you know it, why do you say that it's a fake?" Liu Chang was taken aback by the other party's words.

"You've memorized it accurately, and your method of appraisal is correct as well. There's no doubt that this is a Verdant Bamboo!" Zhang Xuan chuckled lightly.

"These have been confirmed by our predecessors, how dare you try to deny... Huh? What did you just... say? If that's the case, why

do you claim that it's fake..."

"Are you making a fool of us?"

Everyone thought that Zhang Xuan would deny the matter, but he admitted to it directly. For a moment, everyone was stunned.

Even Zhao Feiwu and Jin Conghai found their eyebrows shooting up.

You claimed that the other party had bought a fake, and yet, the next moment, you turned around and said that it is real... Even a person with dissociative identity disorder wouldn't be as fickle as you!

Chapter 454: Purchasing a Herb at an Inexpensive Price (3)

"Making a fool of you all? You are misunderstanding my intentions!"

Even though the other party's face was turning green, Zhang Xuan didn't fall into a panic. Instead, he chuckled lightly and said, "I only said that it's a fake because you are intending to use it to forge Verdant Crystalline Pills, I have never said that it isn't a Verdant Bamboo!"

Confused by Zhang Xuan's words, the elder and Liu Chang glanced at one another in bewilderment. Eventually, the latter couldn't hold himself back any longer and asked, "What do you mean?"

The attendants, Zhao Feiwu, and the others were baffled as well. They had no idea what Zhang Xuan was up to.

"Simple, there's no doubt that this is a Verdant Bamboo, but if you were to use its leaves to forge Verdant Crystalline Pills, I can guarantee you that not only will the pills be ineffective, one will even die from consuming it!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Death? You must be joking! Transcendent Mortals have the ability to communicate with the world and sense the surroundings. While it grants them great strength, it also makes them particularly vulnerable to external influences, making it easy for them to breed inner demons. The Verdant Crystalline Pill forges a

Heart of Crystal within one, thus significantly reducing the damage one could suffer from inner demons. There are only benefits to be derived from its consumption, so how could anyone die from consuming it?" Liu Chang uttered in disbelief.

Even the elder couldn't help but shake his head.

As a Transcendent Mortal, one's will could meld together with one's environment to move the energy in one's surroundings. However, this made it particularly easy for inner demons to appear. The Verdant Crystalline Pill was the best medicine for one to dispel inner demons, and he had even consumed one himself. Its effectiveness was so great that he couldn't even put it into words, so how could one possibly die from it?

This was clearly nonsense!

Besides, as a skilled appraiser, he had also appraised the Crystalline Pill for others, and the other party had consumed it before him. There were no problems whatsoever with it.

To die from consuming it... was completely unheard of.

"Can you prove it?"

The elder turned to Zhang Xuan and harrumphed.

If the other party couldn't prove it, then he could only be spouting nonsense.

"If it were anyone else, there would be no way to prove it other than forging the pill and consuming it. However... it just happens that I do have a way to prove it!"

As though expecting the other party to ask this question, Zhang Xuan's lips curled up. He turned to Liu Chang and asked, "I'll have to trouble you to fetch a piece of leaf for me!"

Liu Chang turned to the elder, and upon seeing the latter nod his head, he walked over and plucked out a leaf.

"Try burning it with fire!" Zhang Xuan instructed.

"Teacher..."

The elder gestured toward him.

"Do as he says!"

Even though he didn't quite trust the other party's words, the other party's calmness had unnerved him.

If the other party was truly spouting nonsense, the other party would have surely flustered before his immense strength and authority. Yet, not only was the other party calm, his movements also exuded deep confidence. This cast doubt in the elder's mind.

Could the Verdant Bamboo... really be a fake?

But that's impossible!

He had specially examined it several times, and regardless of whether it was its stem, leaves, aura, the degree of hardness... There were no problems whatsoever.

"Yes!"

Upon receiving his teacher's consent, Liu Chang nodded and took out an ignitable fire roll. Then, he turned to Zhang Xuan and harrumphed coldly, "This single leaf is worth at least dozens of spirit stones. If your words turn out to be a lie, I'll be expecting you to compensate our loss..."

There were only twelve leaves on the Verdant Bamboo. Given that the entire bamboo was worth three hundred spirit stones, every leaf was worth an exorbitant sum.

A single leaf was more than sufficient to purchase a city in Tianwu Kingdom.

In that sense, every leaf was literally worth a city.

Yet, due to this fellow's claim, they were going to burn a single leaf. The huge loss left even a 2-star appraiser like him with an aching heart.

"Don't worry, if there's no problem with the Verdant Bamboo, I'll surely compensate you. However... I'm afraid that you won't be saying such words in a moment's time," Zhang Xuan said.

"Hmph, let's see what you're up to then!"

Seeing the confidence on Zhang Xuan's face, Liu Chang harrumphed. He ignited the ignitable fire roll and placed it beneath the leaves.

Weng!

After around two minutes, just as Liu Chang was about to demand Zhang Xuan to compensate them, his hands suddenly jolted violently. The green leaf abruptly turned black and an incomparably pungent smell exuded from it. If there was hell in this world, this was probably what it would smell like. The sight felt extremely sinister.

"Ah..."

Shocked, Liu Chang subconsciously let go of the fire roll and the leaf.

"This..."

Jin Conghai and Gu Mu stared at one another in shock.

"Ah?"

The elder was initially looking at Zhang Xuan nonchalantly, but at this moment, his face abruptly warped in shock. He swiftly stepped forward to grab the leaf with his hands, and he stared at it with a grim expression, as though unable to believe the sight before him. "What a potent poison. If this were infused into the Verdant Crystalline Pill, not only would it not dispel one's inner demons, it would even seep into one's zhenqi, assault one's internal organs, causing one to die on the spot..."

As he spoke, cold sweat trickled down his forehead.

If the other party hadn't said anything at all and he'd taken the Verdant Bamboo back to have it forged into Verdant Crystalline Pills, many people would have died. At the same time, his reputation would be completely ruined!

On top of that, he was intending to consume one himself to try for a breakthrough into a higher realm...

If he were to really eat it... Putting aside his reputation and his standing, even his life would be gone.

"What's the meaning of this?"

The elder couldn't maintain his calmness any longer. He turned to look at the attendant with an incredibly awful complexion.

Dang lang!

Liu Chang's face was also incomparably dark. With a flick of his wrist, he drew his sword and pointed it toward the attendant, threatening to kill the latter as soon as the slightest bit of nonsense was uttered from his mouth.

If it were just a fake, they could only blame themselves for the lack of acuity in their judgement. However, it was clear that someone had laced the leaves of the Verdant Bamboo with lethal poison. From the start to the end, that young man had only moved his mouth, and only the attendant had come into contact with it. Who else could the culprit be if not him?

"Ah... Hall Master Sai, please spare me! I'm just an attendant, I've no idea what's going on. Besides, how could I possibly obtain poison of such high grade that even you're unable to perceive it..."

The attendant's knee immediately caved in, and he hurriedly kowtowed non-stop, pleading for the other party to spare him.

Other people might not know this elder's identity and the authority he wielded, but he was well aware of it!

To that elder, killing him was no different from killing an ant.

Thus, not daring to hesitate in the least, he immediately kneeled down and admitted his fault.

"Alright, he's indeed unaware of it!"

Recovering from his shock, the elder realized that he had also blamed the attendant erroneously. Thus, he gestured for Liu Chang to sheathe his sword.

Given the lethality and inconspicuous nature of the poison hidden within the Verdant Bamboo, it must be at least a grade-4 poison.

In other words, the one who poisoned the Verdant Bamboo was most probably at least a 4-star poison master. How could a person of that standing be willing to serve as a mere attendant in the First Class Pavilion? Besides, if the other party truly wanted to make a move on him, given how his guard was down just now, there was no need for him to go through so much trouble.

After all, he might not necessarily buy the Verdant Bamboo. Thus, the hypothesis that the other party had poisoned the Verdant Bamboo in advance to harm him didn't seem to hold.

"Hmph!"

Liu Chang sheathed his sword, but he still maintained an air of hostility.

The medicinal herb that his teacher bought was actually laced with lethal poison. If news were to spread, his teacher would be in

great trouble.

To successfully lace a medicinal herb within the First Class Pavilion with poison, who in the world could it be?

And what did he hope to achieve from this?

"Little brother, thank you for your help!"

The elder turned to Zhang Xuan once more, and this time, instead of disdain and coldness, his gaze was filled with commendation and respect.

Even he was unable to discern any problem with this Verdant Bamboo. Yet, the other party was able to determine that there was a problem with it without even getting close to it. His eye of discernment was way too fearsome!

Most probably, the other party's appraising ability was even higher than his.

Fearsome!

"Now, it's been proved that the Verdant Bamboo is a fake, right?" Zhang Xuan glanced at the elder.

"Yes... It's a fake!" After a moment of hesitation, the elder nodded.

The main purpose of a Verdant Bamboo was to forge it into a pill to supplement one's cultivation. Yet, this stalk would kill the one who ingests it. In that sense, it could indeed be considered a fake.

"Actually, you need not blame him nor the First Class Pavilion. They weren't the ones who laced the Verdant Bamboo with poison. In fact, it wasn't the doing of a human at all!" Placing his hands behind his back, Zhang Xuan lifted his head slightly and spoke with composure.

"It wasn't the doing of a human?"

The elder was bewildered. Even Jin Conghai and Gu Mu couldn't help but turn their gazes over.

Other people might not know too much about poison, but the two of them were true poison masters. They had grown up alongside poison, and they possessed broad knowledge in the field.

The poison contained in the Verdant Bamboo was extremely bizarre. It had already melded within the veins of the leaves, making it extremely difficult to be noticed. On top of that, the poison was exceptionally potent such that it could even kill a Transcendent Mortal 3-dan expert easily. All evidence pointed to it being the doing of a 4-star poison master.

If it wasn't the doing of a human, then... where did the poison come from?

"Bring me the information on the production of the Verdant Bamboo!"

Instead of answering the crowd's doubts, Zhang Xuan turned to the attendant from before and instructed.

"Yes..."

Upon hearing the young man speaking up for him and the First Class Pavilion, the attendant flashed him a look of gratitude before hurriedly walking out. Not too long later, he returned with a book in his hands.

Most larger retailers would look thoroughly into the background of the artifacts they bought and compile it into a book so as to prepare their attendants for the questions of the customers.

This could enhance the value of the treasure and track down the source of the problem if a fault appeared in the goods.

"Read it out loud!" Zhang Xuan instructed.

"Un!" The attendant nodded. Flipping open the book, he began reciting, "Verdant Bamboo, originated from Hongxu Marsh. It was found by a merchant company and four months ago, the merchant company used a unique method to pick it and delivered it here..."

The information regarding the Verdant Bamboo was extremely detailed, and it even included details on who was the one who dug it out, who was the one who delivered it, where was the trade conducted, what kind of method was used to preserve its freshness...

All in all, the introduction took up more than several hundred words.

However, upon hearing the introduction, not only did the crowd not feel enlightened, they fell into even deeper confusion.

The Verdant Bamboo was extremely well-guarded and there was no chance for a poison master to lay his hands on it at all. Thus, this made the possibility of it being a human doing extremely unlikely.

But if it wasn't a human doing, then how did the poison get here?

"The lethal poison had seeped into the branches and leaves, but yet, there isn't any damage on the plant at all. In fact, it's impossible for one to discern that it's poisoned from its outer appearance. Even 4-star poison masters would require a long duration of time to achieve such a feat!"

Jin Conghai spoke with a grim expression. He was also intrigued by this matter.

If those records were real, there was indeed no way for anyone to

strike at all.

After all, it was no easy task for even a 4-star master teacher to poison the Verdant Bamboo so inconspicuously.

One had to know that lethal poison had an adverse effect on plants as well.

"What's going on?"

The more Appraiser Liu Chang listened on, the more confused he became. Eventually, unable to withstand his curiosity anymore, he turned to Zhang Xuan with a questioning look.

"You still don't understand?"

Zhang Xuan chuckled and said, "Fine, I'll explain the matter then! I believe all of us here should know what the specialty of Hongxu Marsh!"

"Specialty? That region seems to specialize in the production of [Withered Leaf Tea]... Could it be related to that?"

The elder couldn't help but turn to look at Zhang Xuan.

Chapter 455: Concrete News of the Soulless Metal Humanoid

The Withered Leaf Tea, also known as the Withered Glory Tea, was a well-known specialty of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance's Hongxu Marsh.

The tea grew in the marsh, and in a single year, there was only a single month that it would be alive. At any other time, it would be no different from a withered tree.

Dead branches growing leaves, one withered while the other glorified, life and death intertwined together in such a mystical manner; this was where the origin of the name of the tea came from.

Upon preparation, this tea could grant one the refreshing sensation of the four seasons, thus making it one of the most well-known tea throughout the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance.

However, Hongxu Marsh was extremely dangerous. There were Transcendent Mortal experts who were devoured by the marsh, never to be seen on the face of this world ever again. On top of that, there's only a month of harvest for the tea leaves and the production amount was extremely low. As such, very few people had a chance to taste it.

"Indeed, that place is known for the production of Withered Leaf Tea! But there's also an animal which lingers around the tea leaves... the Withered Leaf Snake!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Un!"

The crowd nodded in agreement.

The Withered Leaf Snake was a spirit beast which lived off the Withered Leaf Tea. It was a highly venomous spirit beast, and even a Transcendent Mortal 3-dan expert would die easily if bitten by it.

"Could it be that the venom on the Withered Leaf Tea... comes from the Withered Leaf Snake? But that can't be! Even though the Withered Tea Snake's poison is lethal, it has a unique smell to it. On top of it, its saliva also leaves a mark, making it extremely conspicuous to the eye. However, there's no visible damage apparent on this Verdant Bamboo, and it looks as good as new..."

The elder couldn't help but remark.

The Withered Leaf Snake was an extremely fearsome adversary that even Transcendent Mortals had to be careful of, thus contributing to its great reputation. If the Withered Leaf Snake had left behind its saliva on the Verdant Bamboo, he would surely be able to tell so.

"It's not the saliva of the snake, but that... this Verdant Bamboo was the nest for the Withered Leaf Snake. In other words, this smooth-looking bamboo has had a Withered Leaf Snake slithering over it every single day," Zhang Xuan said with a grim expression.

"Ah..."

Hearing the words, the face of the attendant holding the records immediately paled, and he nearly stumbled over.

He was in charge of taking care of the bamboo, and he had been wiping it frequently in the past few days. The thought that it used to be the nest of a snake left him flustered and disgusted.

"As such, the excretions of the Withered Leaf Snake would stick onto the Verdant Bamboo, and over time, they would be absorbed and accumulate within the depths of the veins of the leaves!"

Ignoring the crowd's discomfort, Zhang Xuan continued, "As it's hidden very deeply within, it's impossible to notice it under normal circumstances and it won't have any adverse effects on individuals coming into contact with the bamboo either. However, as soon as the Verdant Bamboo comes into contact with intense heat, the poison will seep out, and all those who touches the poison will suffer greatly!

"If this Verdant Bamboo is only used as a formation core or a weapon, there wouldn't be much of a problem with it. However, it'll be disastrous if one were to use it to forge pills. Even a Transcendent Mortal 3-dan expert would die instantaneously if he were to accidentally consume it! That's also the reason why I said that if you're intending to use it to forge Verdant Crystalline Pills, the Verdant Bamboo you're buying would be a fake!" Zhang Xuan explained.

"So that's the case!"

Upon coming to a realization, the crowd turned to look at the young man in admiration.

To be able to notice the poison hidden deeply within the Verdant Bamboo just by looking at it, how deep must his understanding of the properties of plants, their habitats, and origins be!

"Incredible!"

The elder clenched his fists tightly together.

Putting all other things aside, just the other party's eye of discernment was already far superior to his own.

"Gongzi is indeed formidable, you've truly taught me a valuable lesson today. Since you're interested in the [Spirit Calming Grass], allow me to gift it to you as a token of my gratitude!" the elder gestured grandly and said.

"Teacher..."

Liu Chang was stunned.

Just a moment ago, when that fellow said that he was offering five hundred gold coins to purchase the Spirit Calming Grass, he thought that there was something wrong with the other party's

head. But thinking back on it now, the other party had probably already expected this sight then.

But still, the Spirit Calming Grass was something worth five hundred spirit stones! To give it away just like that... wasn't his teacher being a little too generous?

Even though the other party had helped him by pointing out that there was venom within the Verdant Bamboo, there was no need for such a generous token of gratitude.

"Could it be that... But how is that possible! How could he have predicted this too?"

Suddenly, Liu Chang recalled something and his entire body stiffened. Then, he began to tremble violently.

He suddenly understood why his teacher was being so generous.

An appraiser could only make three appraising mistakes in his entire life. Exceed that amount and one's qualifications would be revoked.

His teacher had appraised countless treasures, and he had already reached the limit of three mistakes. If he were to make another single error, he would be revoked of his license as an appraiser!

In other words, if the other party hadn't interfered and his teacher were to have this Verdant Bamboo forged into a pill, even

if no one were to die from this incident, his teacher would still lose his appraiser qualifications.

Being in a high position for many years, it was unavoidable that he would offend many people and have many enemies. If he lost the protection of his identity, his enemies could potentially come straight for him. In other words... the other party had saved his teacher's life. Putting aside the Spirit Calming Grass, even if it was something even more valuable than that, his teacher would probably give it to him willingly.

But... the matter regarding his teacher reaching the limit of three appraising errors was only known among his teacher's close friends and kin. How did this fellow find out about it? And if he didn't know about it, how could he be so sure that his teacher would give the Spirit Calming Grass to him out of gratitude?

Recalling the encounter a moment ago on the first floor...

Could this young fellow be actually an incomparable expert appraiser?

As such a thought flashed across Liu Chang's mind, he hurriedly turned to look at the young man in an attempt to confirm his evaluation, only to see the young man reply with a righteous look, "How can I accept such a valuable present as a gift? Sun Qiang, pass this senior five hundred gold coins. We have to pay the sum that we agreed on so that this elder doesn't make a loss!"

Pu!

It was just a moment ago that Liu Chang thought that the other party was an expert, but upon hearing those words, Liu Chang's body swayed violently and he nearly spurted a mouthful of blood.

The heck!

To speak such shameless words so brazenly, where is your dignity?

What was the difference between five hundred gold coins and not paying at all?

Was this how an expert should behave?

Hurriedly turning to look at his teacher, he saw his teacher wobbling unstably on his feet, and it seemed as though blood was welling up in his chest. His entire face steeled in frustration, "Gongzi, this is my heartfelt gratitude. There's really no need... for money!"

"Elder, there's no need to be so courteous with me!" The young man insisted. "Five hundred gold coins... is still within my means!"

"..." Liu Chang.

Any trash that you pick up from a battlefield would be worth that much money, of course it is within your means...

Knowing that he would definitely die of frustration if they were to continue quarreling on this matter, the elder chose to accept the gold coins. "I see that gongzi seems to be well-versed in appraising as well. May I know... who is your teacher? Could he be an appraiser as well?"

Liu Chang immediately became more attentive.

Given how the other party was able to discover a problem, which even his teacher couldn't notice, his mastery in appraising had reached an incredible level.

Such a capable young individual must have a peerless expert behind him. He was curious to know which grandmaster Zhang Xuan's teacher was.

"Our young master is Master Teacher Zhang Xuan, and his teacher is Master Teacher Yang Xuan." Sun Qiang stepped forward and introduced proudly.

"Master teacher?"

The elder froze for a moment before coming to realization. His respect for the other party deepened.

On the other hand, Liu Chang leaped back in shock.

If only he knew that the other party had this kind of identity, he wouldn't have dared to stand against him from the start.

Even though an appraiser was one of the most lucrative occupations, it still couldn't match up to master teachers.

It was just like a government official and a nouveau riche; no matter how wealthy one was, the level of influence and prestige the two wielded were worlds apart.

On top of that, this appraising capability of this master teacher wasn't inferior to even that of his teacher.

"I see, that explains your acute eye of discernment. Please do pardon me for my previous rudeness!"

After recovering from his momentary shock, the elder clasped his fist and said, "I am Sai Xiaoyu. I am unbecoming of the address 'elder' so feel free to call me Brother Sai instead!"

The other party's appraising capability wasn't beneath him, and on top of that, he was a master teacher as well. The elder immediately thought of befriending the other party.

"Sai Xiaoyu? Could you be... Hall Master Sai of the Appraiser Hall?"

Upon hearing that name, Zhao Feiwu couldn't help but agitatedly ask.

As the princess of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance and an avid reader, she knew quite a bit about the experts at the peaks the various occupations within the alliance.

It was said that the head of the Appraiser Hall was a man by the name of Sai Xiaoyu, and he was a 4-star pinnacle appraiser. He had appraised countless treasures throughout his life, and it was said that the Alliance Head Residence had hosted him as one of their esteemed guests before.

She thought that it would be nigh impossible to meet such experts, and never in her dreams did she expect to find one being taught a lesson and scammed of a Spirit Calming Grass right before her...

"The position of a hall master is just a result of my old buddies' flattery, it's not worth mentioning!" Upon being recognized, Sai Xiaoyu shook his head with a smile.

"I see, so it's Hall Master Sai. This is great, I just happen to have something that I require your help on."

Upon learning of the other party's identity, Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up and he asked, "I heard that... a Soulless Metal Humanoid has been found in Honghai City. May I know if the news is true, and if so, where it is?"

This was the main reason why he came to Honghai City.

Since this person was the head of the Appraiser Hall, if the news was real, he would definitely be aware of it.

"Soulless Metal Humanoid? I see, Brother Zhang is here for that!"

Hall Master Sai chuckled upon coming to a realization. "The rumors are true, and it is currently in the Appraiser Hall right now. The auction would be carried out tonight."

"Tonight?"

Zhang Xuan clenched his fists tightly together, and a troubled look slowly crept onto his face.

It was already afternoon by the time the group arrived at Honghai City, and they spent quite a bit of time strolling around the Appraiser Hall as well. Judging from the current time, wasn't the auction about to start already?

Yet... he didn't even have a single spirit stone on him at the moment.

Without any money on him, he would probably be expelled right at the door, lest to say, participate in the auction.

One must know that it was a common procedure for larger auctions to demand an entrance fee so as to sieve out true buyers

from the troublemakers. Otherwise, if everyone could enter freely, it might cause chaos in the auctioning.

"Indeed, it'll be conducted two hours later. If Brother Zhang is interested in the auction, I can reserve a suite for you!" Sai Xiaoyu said.

"I'll be thanking Brother Sai in advance then!"

Nodding his head in agitation, Zhang Xuan continued, "May I know how many spirit stones will it require to win the Soulless Metal Humanoid?"

Only with sufficient information could he make thorough preparations.

"The Soulless Metal Humanoid is something left behind by the soul oracles so it's rather difficult to estimate its price. Our primary evaluation has priced it at 1500 spirit stones, but considering the atmosphere in the auction, its final price will definitely be jacked up to at least three thousand spirit stones!"

Sai Xiaoyu explained before turning to look at Zhang Xuan with a smile, "Why? Is Brother Zhang interested in the matter?"

"I am. It's just that... I'm a little short on funds..."

Zhang Xuan scratched his head awkwardly.

"Short on funds?" Sai Xiaoyu chuckled. "There's no need for worry about that. I have some savings of my own so I can lend some of it to you to make up for the amount you are lacking. May I know how much money are you short of?"

"You're willing to lend some money to me? Great!"

Zhang Xuan gazed at Sai Xiaoyu in gratitude, "I am still lacking three thousand spirit stones, can you... lend the money to me?"

"..." Sai Xiaoyu.

"..." Liu Chang.

"..." Everyone.

Chapter 456: Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets

Three thousand spirit stones should be sufficient for you to take down the Soulless Metal Humanoid. To borrow so much money... Does that mean that you don't even have a single spirit stone on you...

A dark line streaked across Zhao Feiwu and Jin Conghai's foreheads.

It was no wonder why this fellow offered gold coins each time he tried to buy something. They thought that it was an eccentric quirk of an expert... But to think that there would be such a practical reason to it!

To think of buying the Soulless Metal Humanoid without any money on hand...

Just the thought of it left them faint-headed.

"Cough cough!" Sai Xiaoyu coughed. He nearly choked to death on the other party's words. "Brother Zhang Xuan, this... Do you not have even a single spirit stone on you?"

"That's right!" Without any hesitation, Zhang Xuan nodded his head.

He had only started with a total of ten or so spirit stones, and he had used it all in the midst of the journey. As such, his pockets were completely empty at the moment.

Even though he had almost a hundred million gold coins in his storage ring, gold coins weren't really in use here. In a sense, it wasn't wrong to say that Zhang Xuan didn't have even a single cent on him.

"This..."

Not expecting the other party to reply so candidly, Sai Xiaoyu's face turned so red that it nearly oozed blood.

In truth, it was only out of politeness that he offered to lend the other party money. After all, given the other party's capability, he was indeed a person worth befriending. Yet, the other party took it for real and asked for three thousand at a single go...

The heck!

Even though he was the head of the Appraiser Hall, he didn't have that much money on him either. Furthermore, he had just spent two thousand spirit stones and given away a stalk of Spirit Calming Grass...

Even if you wanted to exploit the rich, you should at least show some restraint!

"You don't have that much money? Never mind then. Is there any way to earn money swiftly in the Appraiser Hall?"

Seeing the other party's expression, Zhang Xuan immediately knew that the other party was surely unable to fork out this sum, and he shook his head in disappointment.

In truth, he was only giving it a try. He didn't really think that the other party would be able to loan him this massive sum of money.

Besides, the both of them had only just met. It would be bizarre if one was willing to lend such a huge sum to a stranger.

"A way to earn money swiftly? You wish to earn sufficient money now to join the auction two hours later to buy the Soulless Metal Humanoid?" Sai Xiaoyu and the crowd nearly spurted blood.

That fellow sure knew how to dream!

If it was that easy to earn spirit stones, he, as the head of the Appraiser Hall, wouldn't have to come over here to browse through the various artifacts in hopes of earning a profit.

If there was truly such an easy way to earn spirit stones, he would have surely done it himself already. There was no reason to leave it for someone else.

"Un, I have to earn three thousand spirit stones before the

auction!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

If he didn't earn this sum of money within the next two hours, he would be unable to buy the Soulless Metal Humanoid and thus miss the opportunity to wake Lu Chong up.

"There's truly no way around it. You also know it yourself, three thousand spirit stones is a huge sum..."

Seeing that the other party was serious, Sai Xiaoyu shook his head helplessly.

Appraisers mainly earned their money through the price difference from buying and selling treasures. Even for Sai Xiaoyu, it would take several years before he could save three thousand spirit stones. Furthermore, it was assuming that he was lucky enough to stumble by cheap treasures and find suitable buyers.

Without meeting these two conditions, it would be impossible for him to earn money. In fact, it was often that he wasn't able to find any suitable buyers for the treasure that he bought.

To earn three thousand spirit stones in two hours... No one would dare to even dream of it!

"Teacher..."

But halfway through his words, Liu Chang abruptly interjected.

Turning around, he saw his student looking at him hesitantly, "I think that maybe 'that'... can earn one that much money within two hours!"

"That? Do you mean... [Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets]?"

Sai Xiaoyu's body jolted, but he eventually simply shook his head with a bitter smile on his face, "It's impossible for anyone to succeed in it! It has been many years since the establishment of the Appraiser Hall, but there hasn't been a single person who passed it yet..."

"But that's the only way for one to earn three thousand spirit stones within two hours. I don't think that there's any other plausible way other than that!" Liu Chang shook his head.

Even though being an appraiser was a lucrative occupation, spirit stones still weren't that easy to earn.

Usually, they would earn a commission determined by the value of the item. However, putting aside how there were very few valuable treasures to be appraised, there weren't many customers in the first place. After all, no one would be willing to spend their spirit stones if they could avoid it.

Thus, even if Zhang Xuan were to offer his service as an appraiser at this moment, it was impossible for him to gather three thousand spirit stones in just two hours.

"This..."

Sai Xiaoyu hesitated.

He knew that what his student said was true.

"Why? Do you have an idea in mind? What does Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets mean?" Zhang Xuan asked, having heard the conversation of the duo.

"Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets is actually a trial for the 5-star appraiser examination. Once one passes the examination, one will be entitled to a massive reward accumulated within the Appraiser Hall over a long period of time. If I'm not wrong, it's worth... around five thousand spirit stones now..."

Since the other party asked about it, Sai Xiaoyu could only explain the matter.

"Trial?" Zhang Xuan was bewildered. "There are rewards to taking high-tiered appraiser examinations?"

He had taken on the master teacher examination, beast tamer examination, painter examination, physician examination... But he had never heard of one earning rewards from taking on the examination.

If that was true, then he should indeed try taking on the appraiser examination.

"There's indeed a reward, but it is actually... prize money accumulated over time." Seeing through Zhang Xuan's thoughts, Sai Xiaoyu shook his head helplessly.

"Prize money?" Zhang Xuan blinked his eyes in confusion.

Zhao Feiwu had read many books, but even she was unaware of the internal rules within the Appraiser Hall.

"Un, there are many appraisers in the Appraiser Hall, but... there's a limit to the knowledge an individual can wield. As such, appraisers often stumble by treasures that they were unable to be identified. Some of these treasures had been discussed by innumerable appraisers throughout generations, but no one was able to accurately identify what they were.

"Thus, in order to dispel their doubts, some of our predecessors chose to offer monetary incentives out of their own pocket to attract others to come forward, examine, and identify these treasures, as well as to encourage their juniors to study hard and solve these mysteries. However... even until date, no one has succeeded yet. As time passed, the reward grew larger and larger, and to date, it has already reached five thousand spirit stones!" Sai Xiaoyu said.

While the reward was indeed tempting... but how could be easy to identify the treasures that countless predecessors had failed to

successfully appraise!

"There's such a matter?" Zhang Xuan widened his eyes in shock.

This seemed somewhat similar to the Wall of Dilemma of the Physician Guild. No matter how impressive a guild was, there would always be problems that would stump them.

"Indeed! It has been long since the founding of the Appraiser Hall, and many talented appraisers have given it a try. However, no one had yet to succeed!" Sai Xiaoyu shook his head.

The reason why he didn't bring it up was simply because it was way too hard. He was the most impressive appraiser in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, but even he was helpless before it, needless to say, a youngster like Zhang Xuan.

"Yet to succeed? But since no one knows what those treasures are, how do you ascertain whether someone has succeeded or not?" Zhang Xuan asked in puzzlement.

Since even the predecessors were unable to identify those treasures, then who could confirm if one's answer was right or not? After all, if no one could identify those treasures, no one could say for sure whether one's evaluation was right or not.

"When a treasure reaches Sprit rank, it'll gain wisdom. As long as there's no mistake in one's description, one will be acknowledged by the treasure. Besides, we're all official appraisers. Even though

we might not be able to identify the treasure, we're still more than capable of assessing and testing whether one's answer is correct or not!" Sai Xiaoyu explained helplessly.

These were basic facts that an appraiser should know, yet this fellow didn't even know about it at all? Was this fellow truly an appraiser who was more than capable than him?

"That's true..." Zhang Xuan came to a realization.

Even if a formidable appraiser was unable to identify the specifics of a treasure, they should still have a way to determine whether a person's evaluation was correct or not.

If they didn't even have this much skill, they would be unqualified as an appraiser.

"Alright, bring me over to take a look. I would like to give it a try!" Knowing that this method could bring him easy money, Zhang Xuan swiftly made up his mind.

"Brother Zhang, hold it for a moment. Allow me to finish my words first before you make your decision!" Seeing the other party deciding on the matter recklessly, Sai Xiaoyu hurriedly stopped him.

"Un!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

"Even though there's a reward for this trial, there's actually stake

involved. Every challenge requires one to put a hundred spirit stones as deposit! But of course, I can pay the deposit for you, so there's no need for you to worry about it." Sai Xiaoyu said.

"A hundred spirit stones?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

It seemed like there was no free lunch in the world.

He thought that he could join for free, but that didn't seem like it was the case.

But thinking about it, it was to be expected. Without this restriction, all appraisers would be rushing to give it a try whenever they had the time, and the Appraiser Hall wouldn't be able to function normally anymore.

"Not only so, there's also a strict time limit to the challenge!"

Sai Xiaoyu continued, "Just as the name, Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets, suggests, the treasures will be sent down to one via water, and one will be given ten breaths to assess and identify it at a river bend. After which, one'll have to point out the name and origin of the treasure immediately!"

"Point out the name and origin of the treasure within ten breaths? How is that possible?" Before Zhang Xuan could say anything, Zhao Feiwu had already exclaimed in shock.

To identify something, an appraiser usually had to do all kinds of

assessment on the artifact, such as using a magnifying crystal, studying the patterns on it, and knocking on it to determine its constituents.

The identification of any treasure was a lengthy and troublesome process; even if one was familiar with the item, one would have to confirm it multiple times before coming to an evaluation.

Yet, to have to offer a correct answer in just ten breaths, that was outright impossible!

On top of that, one was supposed to identify a treasure that even the predecessors were unable to identify?

"Before the identification process, is there any tip or information available to one?" Zhao Feiwu asked.

If there was some information, one could at least prepare oneself and focus on the key points of the treasure immediately.

"There isn't! The main reason why we're reluctant to give out prior information is so as to not mislead the challengers!" Sai Xiaoyu said.

If anyone knew what the treasure was for sure, they would have long passed the trial. Since no one was able to identify the treasure, the information was bound to be incomplete. If so, there was a high chance it could influence the challenger's evaluation and impede them from coming up with the correct answer.

"That's true..."

Zhao Feiwu frowned deeply.

While the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets sounded like easy money, it was simply way too difficult. Putting aside 4-star appraisers, even 5-star appraisers would probably be stumped by it.

Just as Zhao Feiwu was about to turn to Zhang Xuan and advise him against it, the latter smiled lightly and replied, "Alright then, I wish to challenge this Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets. I'll borrow a hundred spirit stones from you first, and after I'm done with it, I'll return you the sum multiple folds!"

Chapter 457: Why Don't We Make a Bet Then?

Seeing the other party insist on it, Sai Xiaoyu relented, "If you really wish to attempt it, I can bring you over!"

Even though the young man before him was able to see through a problem that he couldn't discern, deep in his heart, he still thought that it was impossible for the other party to pass the trial. Thus, he didn't pay much heed to Zhang Xuan's declaration of paying him back multiple folds. Truthfully, he had already regarded the hundred spirit stones as a gift.

After putting away the items that he had bought, the group walked out of the First Class Pavilion and headed up the stairs.

The bottom two floors of the Appraiser Hall were markets while the floors beyond that made up their official guild. Walking into the lounge, they saw dozens of people lining up in two neat columns with all kinds of treasures in their hands.

These artifacts weren't too valuable; they were most probably ordinary goods that could be bought for just several spirit stones on the first floor.

There were two young men at the very front of the queue examining each of the customers' artifacts carefully. After assessing it closely, they would leave a mark on it and write an appraisal document.

Some of those who had their artifacts appraised left overjoyed whereas some left depressed.

Both fake and authentic goods were mixed up with one another in the market on the first floor; if one chose correctly, one could make a huge profit. Otherwise, one could only concede to their misfortune. Looking at the expression of the crowd, it was clear that a larger proportion of the people belonged to the latter group.

"There are some who feel worried even after buying their goods so they would come over here and have their items appraised. The ones conducting the appraisal on this floor are 1-star appraisers who have just passed their examination!" Sai Xiaoyu said.

"Un!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

He had also seen the single shining golden star on the emblem pinned in front of the two young men's chests.

1-star appraisers were already capable of identifying some of the more common and simpler treasures, and the artifacts sent here were mostly of this tier as well.

"The Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets is in front, let's proceed on!"

The group didn't dawdle in the main lounge for too long. Under Sai Xiaoyu's lead, it didn't take long for them to arrive at a room.

"Hall Master Sai!"

"Teacher!"

Upon walking into a room, several elders immediately came forward and greeted Sai Xiaoyu respectfully.

As the hall master, Sai Xiaoyu wielded immense prestige in the Appraiser Hall. There were many 3-star appraisers who were his students, and they were indebted to him for his guidance.

Taking a glance in the room, there were only around six to seven people here. Puzzled, Zhao Feiwu asked, "How many appraisers are there in the Appraiser Hall in total?"

Upon hearing the question, a bitter smile appeared on Sai Xiaoyu's face as he shook his head, "Even though the Appraiser Hall sounds impressive, including me, there is only a total of three 4-star and eight 3-star appraisers. The others are all 2-star and 1-star appraisers!"

"So few people?" The crowd was taken aback.

Seeing the grandness of the Appraiser Hall, they thought that there would be at least a dozen of 4-star appraisers here. Yet, contrary to their expectations, there were only three of them.

It was no wonder why people said that it was hard to qualify as an appraiser. From the looks of it now, that didn't seem like just a rumor.

"Indeed!" Sai Xiaoyu shook his head. Changing the topic, he turned to the two 3-star appraisers and said, "Call Elder Chen and Elder Lu over. Tell them that someone is interested in challenging the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets!"

"Challenging the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets?"

The duo was taken aback. They hurriedly turned around and left.

As 3-star appraisers, they were well aware of the difficulty of the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets. It had been many years already, but still, not a single person had succeeded. To think that someone would still be interested in attempting it even now, he must be blinded by the immense reward.

Not too long later, two white-bearded elders walked over. Before they even reached the room, a rough voice had already sounded, "Hall Master Sai, someone intends to challenge the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets? Is it Old Hu or Old Du? Those two fellows haven't given up yet?"

The Old Hu and Old Du that he spoke of were 4-star appraisers from other branches.

They had visited Honghai City several times in hopes of clearing

the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets, but to date, they hadn't succeeded yet.

Only those two fellows had attempted the trial in the past few years. Most of the appraisers didn't bother trying, knowing the difficulty of the trial. Thus, as soon as the two elders heard that someone intended to challenge the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets, they immediately thought of them.

"Hmm? Where are they?"

Looking around the room but not seeing the familiar figures he expected to see, the rough-voiced elder asked in bewilderment.

"Elder Chen, the challenger this time isn't one of them. It's this little brother here, Zhang Xuan!"

Seeing Elder Chen looking around in bewilderment, Sai Xiaoyu shook his head and stopped the latter.

"Him?"

Not only were the two elders stunned, the other appraisers in the room also had a confused expression on their face.

They thought that the one challenging the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets would be some incredible appraiser, but to think that it would still be an immature fellow who wasn't even twenty yet.

Ignoring the crowd's reaction, Sai Xiaoyu introduced, "Brother Zhang, this is Elder Chen Yu. The one next to him is Elder Lu Xi. They are the other two 4-star appraisers of the guild!"

Zhang Xuan nodded.

Even if Sai Xiaoyu hadn't introduced them, Zhang Xuan had also guessed as much. Even though the two elders weren't dressed in the appraiser robe, their aura was incredibly profound and heavy. With just a look, it was clear that they possessed incredible cultivation that was on par with Jin Conghai.

Judging from their strength and their casual attitude before Sai Xiaoyu, it was clear that they were the two remaining 4-star appraisers.

"Hall master, what did you call him? Brother?"

Elder Chen was the first to notice Sai Xiaoyu's bizarre way of addressing Zhang Xuan, and he was puzzled by it.

As the head of the Appraiser Hall, his standing was so high that everyone, with the exception of them two, had to address him as 'teacher'. Yet, he actually addressed a young fellow as 'brother'... What could that young fellow's background be?

"Un, even though Brother Zhang is young, his expertise in appraising is in no way inferior to me!" Sai Xiaoyu chuckled.

"In no way inferior to you... Aren't you exaggerating it a little too much?" Elder Chen shook his head in disbelief. The other appraisers in the room shared his thoughts as well.

Rather than talent, appraising was more about experience and knowledge.

Knowledge formed the basis of an appraiser's evaluation, and only with boundless knowledge would one be able to reach great heights in the path of an appraiser.

Judging from this fellow's appearance, he seemed to be only eighteen or nineteen this year. Even if he had started studying from his mother's womb, at maximum, he only had twenty years to accrue knowledge. How could he possibly compete with Hall Master Sai, a 4-star appraiser who had devoted his entire life to appraising?

"It's true. A problem has occurred with the Verdant Bamboo that teacher appraised previously..." Seeing the doubt in the eyes of the crowd, Liu Chang quickly explained the happenings from earlier.

"You mean that... with just a look, he noticed the lethal poison contained with the Verdant Bamboo and determined that it wasn't suitable for the forging of pills?"

"This doesn't seem like the means of an appraiser, doesn't it?"

After hearing Liu Chang's story, not only were the crowd unimpressed, their bewilderment only deepened.

An appraiser would have to examine the bamboo carefully, perhaps taking some samples and experimenting with them even before coming to such a conclusion. Yet, to be able to determine so much with just a single glance... Why did he feel like a fortune teller instead?

"Alright, Brother Zhang, we'll open the chamber to the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets for you right now. You'll have to enter alone, and there'll be a total of ten treasures within. As long as you appraise a single one of them accurately, you will be considered to have passed the trial!"

Disregarding the doubtful looks from the crowd, Sai Xiaoyu waved his hands.

"Un!" Zhang Xuan replied.

It didn't seem difficult since he only had to identify one of the artifacts correctly.

"Let's begin!"

Sai Xiaoyu beckoned for Elder Chen and Elder Lu to the wall, and each of them took out a key and placed it into an aperture in the wall.

Jiya!

The wall parted, revealing a door within,

The artifacts within the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets were incredible treasures. Thus, for security purposes, only when the three keys were gathered could it be opened.

Without the three keys, even a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan expert would be unable to enter.

With a flick of his wrist, Sai Xiaoyu took out a pile of spirit stones and placed it within a gray aperture on the wall. In an instant, it was as though a formation had been activated, and brilliant light shone from it.

"You can enter now!"

Sai Xiaoyu gestured.

Thus, Zhang Xuan began walking over. However, before he could walk through the door, Elder Chen stepped in front of him.

"Do you understand the difficulty of the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets?"

Even though Hall Master Sai had just praised the other party, he still didn't think too much of this young man.

If Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets was that simple, someone else would have succeeded long ago.

"I have no idea!" Zhang Xuan shook his head. "I have just heard about it, and it's said that as long as one clears the trial, one will be entitled to a reward of five thousand spirit stones. Thus, I decided to give it a try!"

"You dare to challenge it... right after hearing about it?"

Elder Chen felt his vision turning dark.

He thought that the other party might be genius who had prepared a long time for this since Hall Master Sai had brought him over. Yet, to think that he had come over right after hearing of it...

Also, what did he mean by five thousand spirit stones? It can't be that he was here for the reward, was he?

Elder Chen was furious.

The Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets wasn't a mere challenge. It was a trial for 5-star appraisers as well, and as such, only 4-star appraisers were qualified to attempt it. Yet, to wish to challenge it just for the prize money, wasn't the other party taking this way too lightly?

"Hall Master Sai, to allow a person to challenge the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets just for the prize money, isn't this infringing on the prestige of the Appraiser Hall?"

Unable to hold back his rage, Elder Chen turned to Sai Xiaoyu to protest.

To wish to attempt a 5-star appraiser examination test just for its monetary reward, the other party was underestimating the occupation a little way too much.

"Elder Chen, you're exaggerating the matter. Brother Zhang is... is... here for the spirit stones, but he has the capability to back it up!"

Sai Xiaoyu intended to speak up for Zhang Xuan, but after a moment of hesitation, he realized that this fellow... was indeed here for the spirit stones!

"Capability to back up his words? Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets was also known as Harmonious Stream of Flowing Leaves. Its meaning is simple; the challenger has to identify the type, name, origin, value, and various other properties of the artifact in the time that the artifact is flowing by... To challenge it just for the spirit stones, this..." Elder Chen protested furiously.

Interrupting the other party, Sai Xiaoyu said, "Enough, since the trial is already activated, let's just allow him to attempt it. Who knows, perhaps Brother Zhang might be able to induce a miracle?"

He didn't bear much hope for Zhang Xuan, but since he had agreed to give him a try, he decided to go through with it.

After all, the other party had done him such a huge favor. How could he face others if he couldn't even deliver what he had promised?

"Un!"

Seeing that Sai Xiaoyu had managed to keep Elder Chen in check, Zhang Xuan couldn't be bothered to say anything else. Thus, he stepped forward and entered the room.

Weng!

As soon as he entered, the doors behind him closed.

"Nonsense! This is truly nonsense!"

Elder Chen flung his sleeves in displeasure.

"This elder over here, do you mean that our young master will fail the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets?"

Just as Elder Chen was displeased with Hall Master Sai's actions and was about to protest, a nonchalant voice sounded from behind. Turning around, Elder Chen saw a plump man whose fat was trembling standing not too far away.

"Indeed, the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets requires one to have a deep understanding of the art of appraising. Given how even Old Hu and Old Du weren't able to clear it, how can an eighteen or nineteen-year-old fellow like him clear the trial?"

Elder Chen harrumphed in displeasure.

"Since you're so certain of it, then... why don't we bet on it then?" the plump man said.

"Bet?" Elder Chen was taken aback.

"Indeed. I'll bet that our young master will surely be able to clear the trial while you'll bet for the opposite. As for the stakes... let's not make it too big. What do you think of three thousand spirit stones?"

The plump man stared at Elder Chen with a bright smile.

Chapter 458: Copper Hammer

"Not make it too big... and three thousand spirit stones?"

Elder Chen nearly fainted on the spot.

If he were to take out all of his assets, he could fork out this sum. However, he would be as good as bankrupt if he were to do so.

To take out so much money for a bet, you must be insane!

"Three thousand spirit stones... Do you have that much money?" Seeing that his old friend was placed in an awkward position, Elder Lu stepped forward to intervene.

"Of course I don't have that much money!" the plump man declared proudly.

"You don't have that much?"

Everyone fell speechless.

You spoke as though you had several ten thousand of spirit stones in your possession... Despite having nothing at all, you still dare to initiate a gamble, not to mention, to speak so brazenly. Aren't you being way too arrogant!

Zhao Feiwu slapped her forehead in frustration.

She had witnessed this fearless fool acting up many times, but still, she couldn't have imagined that he would go straight up to a 4-star appraiser and propose a bet... And more importantly, he didn't even have the money to pay up!

The heck, you sure are an incredible person!

"It sure is true, birds of a feather do flock together..."

She couldn't help but shake her head.

The young master of that plump man, Sun Qiang, was a fellow who seemed to fear nothing but peacefulness. Just a while ago, the young master taught Hall Master Sai a lesson in public, and now, the servant was going even further. Honestly, where did these two eccentric fellows pop out from?

"Since you don't have any money, why should I gamble with you?" Elder Chen replied with a steeled face.

"It's true that I don't have any money, but Hall Master Sai does. It's just three thousand spirit stones, he'll at least lend us this meager sum!" Sun Qiang smiled.

"..."

Hall Master Sai, who was watching the commotion by the side,

didn't expect to get brought into all of the sudden. He nearly spurted blood.

He did say that he would lend some money to Zhang Xuan but that was more of a pleasantry. Yet, this master and servant duo took his words seriously; putting aside how one tried to borrow three thousand spirit stones from him for an auction, the other one was now trying to get three thousand spirit stones from him for a gamble... Do you all know what politeness is? Can you all show some restraint?

Do you all need to be so darned?

"I..."

Hall Master Sai was just about to explain when the plump man before him shook his hands casually and said, "Even if Hall Master Sai is ungrateful decides to disregard how our young master helped him, Zhao Feiwu gongzi would also surely loan the sum to us. It's just three thousand spirit stones, to gongzi, it doesn't mean anything much!"

"..." Zhao Feiwu.

I'm just an innocent passer-by, why did you have to involve me in the conflict...

Hall Master Sai's eyes also flipped over.

What do you mean by calling me ungrateful and disregard how your young master has helped me? Haven't I given him a Spirit Calming Grass already? In fact, I even suppressed all opposition and paid a hundred spirit stones for him so that he can enter the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets...

Is this not considered as repaying the favor?

The duo was just about to protest when Sun Qiang shook his hands and spoke up once more, "Look, neither of them are disagreeing with me. This shows that three thousand spirit stones mean nothing to them at all! Don't worry, if we were to lose, we'll surely be able to rake up the money to repay you. But as for you... You just declared so confidently that our young master will surely fail, it can't be that you're regretting what you said right now, can it? To think that you're a 4-star appraiser at that! To be unable to take out this little bit of money to prove yourself, how embarrassing..."

"You..."

Not expecting to be looked down on by a servant, Elder Chen's face flushed red in anger.

"What you? If you truly don't dare to gamble with me, then let's just forget about it. However, you'd better keep your mouth in check next time. Our young master is incredibly talented, and your insignificant Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets means nothing to him at all!"

Harrumphing coldly, Sun Qiang tilted his head upward arrogantly. He had complete confidence in Zhang Xuan.

"Fine, I'll wager with you then!" Seeing how the other party was getting more and more arrogant, Elder Chen couldn't hold himself back anymore.

As a 4-star appraiser, it was indeed embarrassing for him to argue with a servant. However, this plump man had truly gone too far.

His tone was contemptuous and his attitude was arrogant. On top of that, his disdainful glance... How did a 4-star appraiser like him, who was respected no matter where he went, become no different from a shameless beggar?

He could tolerate being looked down on by a 5-star appraiser, a 4-star master teacher, or even the hall master. However, being looked down by a fellow whose cultivation was only... only... He simply couldn't take this lying down!

"Not bad, does anyone else dare to wager with me? I thought that all of you doubted our young master's capability? It's not too late now. Otherwise, you won't get a second chance..."

Sun Qiang chuckled gleefully upon seeing that he had managed to hook this big fish. He immediately scanned the room for any potential customers.

" ... "

Hearing that the fellow still wanted to wager with the rest of them, the crowd fell speechless.

"Look, the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets is beginning..."

Just as Sun Qiang was trying to dupe a few other people to wager with him, a voice amidst the crowd suddenly sounded. Everyone immediately turned to look at the wall, only to see it growing brighter and brighter, as though some formation was gradually whirling to its peak.

...

What that lay beyond the door wasn't another room but a garden. It was filled with flowers, and a faint aroma lingered in the air. There was a stream within the garden flowing from the distance, and a 'tik tak' sound echoed in the air as it struck against the rocks, forming a melodious tune.

The stream was winding, and right before Zhang Xuan was an arc that was sufficiently wide for an individual to stand on.

As soon as Zhang Xuan walked over, it was as though a formation was activated instantly. A leaf slowly flowed over from the distance.

A bizarrely-shaped object was placed on top of the leaf. Its

irregular shape made it difficult for one to tell what it was.

"Seems like this is the artifact that I'll have to appraise..."

Activating the Eye of Insight, Zhang Xuan realized that he couldn't see through the properties of the artifact and his eyes immediately lit up.

As expected of a treasure that stumped even 4-star master teacher. Even the Eye of Insight was unable to discern what it was.

Of the name, Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets, goblets referred to wine cups and it was commonly used by literati. They would often sit by the stream and allow a goblet to slowly flow along with the currents, and whoever it reaches shall gulp down the wine and come up with a poem.

As most artifacts would simply sink due to their weight, the leaf of a Purple Mountain Tree was used to float them.

This leaf was extremely light, and it could easily keep one or two adult humans afloat on the surface of the water without any problem. This was also the reason why the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets was also known as Harmonious Stream of Flowing Leaves.

"What in the world is that?"

Since the leaf hadn't reached Zhang Xuan yet, he could only

assess the artifact by its shape and outer appearance.

It was around the size of a watermelon, and it was indigo in color. It seemed to be forged by some kind of special alloy.

After staring at it for a moment, Zhang Xuan couldn't help but shake his head.

He had never read any book on appraising so he wasn't too sure how appraisers work.

Given how many master appraisers couldn't identify these artifacts, how could an amateur like him possibly see through them?

"Forget it!"

Turning his head away from it, Zhang Xuan took out a paper and brush. Then, when the leaf finally reached him, he stretched out his hands to touch it.

Weng!

A book appeared in his mind.

The main reason why he dared to challenge the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets was due to the Library of Heaven's Path. Otherwise, given his lacking appraising skills, he would surely be

unable to identify even a single one of the artifacts.

Flipping open the book, Zhang Xuan began jotting down the details.

"Copper Hammer, crafted three thousand years ago by 5-star Blacksmith Duanmu Yiguang. Its material is an alloy consisting of thirteen rare minerals, Hundredwar Metal, Cleardust Sand, Indigold Metal... and crafted over a period of forty-nine days..."

...

While Zhang Xuan was writing on the book, the crowd outside was staring at the wall nervously.

Sun Qiang ran around to persuade others to wager with him but no one bothered with him. At this moment, everyone's attention was fixated on the wall. They wanted to know whether this young man could successfully identify an artifact and clear the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets.

"Judging from the time, the first treasure should have reached him already. Do you think he'll succeed?" an appraiser amidst the crowd asked.

"Succeed? You must be joking! Even Hall Master Sai has challenged the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets multiple times but he was unable to identify a single one of the artifacts. This just shows how difficult the matter is. How could a young lad

like him possibly succeed?"

"Putting everything aside, just look at that arrogant servant of his. Do you think that a real appraiser would have such an arrogant servant?"

"That's hard to say though. Since he's willing to propose this bet, it could only mean that he's confident..."

...

Everyone discussed with hushed voices.

Even the youngest of the appraisers in the room were in their thirties. They found it hard to accept that a lad who wasn't even twenty yet was challenging the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets.

"Don't worry. If the artifacts in the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets could be identified so easily, it wouldn't be taken as the 5-star appraiser examination!"

Seeing Elder Chen staring at the wall nervously as well, Elder Lu walked over and consoled him.

In truth, he didn't think much of Zhang Xuan either.

He had attempted the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets

before, and putting aside how difficult it was to identify those peculiar artifacts, more importantly, the time which one had to examine them was way too limited. In just ten breaths, it would have already flowed away from one. How could one successfully appraise an artifact which one had never seen before in just ten breaths?

"Worry? What do I have to worry? He's just an ignorant brat. Even though he isn't an appraiser at all, he still dares to spout such arrogant words..."

Elder Chen harrumphed, but halfway through his words, a bell chimed and his body suddenly jolted.

Dong!

That sound came from the beyond the wall, and it seemed to resonate in the depths of one's soul.

"A chime? Did he fail?"

"Wait, that shouldn't be. Only after all of the artifacts have been appraised will a bell chime to indicate the challenger's failure. Judging from the time, he should have just barely appraised his first artifact!"

The crowd was taken aback. A confused look appeared on their faces.

The chiming of a bell usually meant that one had failed to identify a single artifact in the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets and that one had failed the trial.

Was it over already? But Zhang Xuan had only just entered a moment ago, and judging from the time, he should have only just appraised the first artifact!

"It's said that if one didn't offer the slightest appraisal on the first artifact, one will be declared to have failed the trial immediately!"

"There's such a saying?"

"Wait a moment. Now that I think about it, I recall reading it somewhere in the books before!"

Some amidst the crowd shouted and a bizarre expression immediately crept on everyone's faces.

Even if a challenger couldn't identify the first treasure, he could at least make a rough guess. If Zhang Xuan had really failed because he didn't write anything at all, that would be truly embarrassing!

Hualala!

Everyone immediately turned to look at Sun Qiang with eyes of sympathy.

Without a doubt, this fellow had lost tragically this time.

Dang lang!

But at that moment, the sound of a teacup falling to the ground echoed in the room.

Following which, everyone saw Hall Master Sai's body trembling ceaselessly, and his face gradually paled.

"That isn't... a chime. It's... Spirit Euphoria! In other words, not only did he manage to identify the artifact, he even gained the acknowledgement of the artifact's spirit!"

Chapter 459: The Call of the Spirit, Acknowledgement of the Painting

"Spirit Euphoria?"

Elder Chen and Elder Lu stared at one another and froze. "How... How is that possible?"

"The chiming should be heavy and deep, but this sound is sharp and resonates with one's soul... Only the legendary Spirit Euphoria is capable of inducing such euphoria in one's heart..." Hall Master Sai said.

"This..."

The duo staggered.

Thinking back, given the agitation they had just felt from the sound a moment ago, it was indeed unlikely to be the doing of a bell chime.

Could it be really... Spirit Euphoria?

But how was that possible?

Elder Chen's face twitched, and his lips turned white.

He had just proudly declared that the other party surely wouldn't be able to identify even a single treasure, yet not only did the other party manage to do so, he even induced Spirit Euphoria...

Did he have to be so formidable?

"The Acknowledgement of a Treasure, Spirit Euphoria! This is the call that formidable spirit weapons induce when they're excited?"

"This-this..."

Hearing Hall Master Sai's words, all those who shot gazes of sympathy toward Sun Qiang were dumbfounded. It was as though someone had forced a turtle into their mouth, making it impossible for them to close it.

They thought that this fellow would lose so tragically that he might be leaving stark naked, but he managed to make such a huge comeback...

It was fortunate that no one was silly enough to wager with him previously. Otherwise, the one who would be leaving stark naked would be them!

As cold sweat drenched their backs, they subconsciously turned to look at Elder Chen, only to see his face steeled and his forehead marked with black streaks. He looked as though he would faint at any moment.

Three thousand spirit stones... Even though he was a 4-star appraiser, he was probably doubting the meaning of life at this moment.

Seeing everyone's expression, Sun Qiang asked in puzzlement, "What does Spirit Euphoria mean?"

Pu!

Elder Chen couldn't hold it back anymore and a mouthful of blood spurted out.

There was not a single appraiser who didn't know of Spirit Euphoria. In fact, even apprentices would be aware of it.

Yet, this fellow didn't know a thing at all...

It was one thing for him to lose to a 5-star appraiser or a formidable expert, but to lose to a servant who couldn't even compare to an apprentice...

Why was he so foolish as to be goaded into making the wager?

Seeing how the confused plump man was about to ask the frenzied Elder Chen about the matter, Liu Chang finally couldn't watch on anymore and hurried forward to explain, "You should know about how items can be divided into five tiers; God, Saint,

Spirit, Phantom, and Mortal, right?"

"Un!" Sun Qiang nodded.

This classification wasn't a secret even in Tianxuan Kingdom. It was a common fact known to all cultivators.

"When an equipment reaches Spirit tier, it'll gain spirit. It's similar to the Spirit Creation of paintings. Even though it's unable to think like humans, it'll be able to recognize and acknowledge cultivators. This aspect is somewhat similar to having a beast tamer acknowledge one as its master."

Liu Chang continued, "Equipment that acknowledged a cultivator would release this kind of euphoric sound, and this is termed as Spirit Euphoria. As soon as it appears, a cultivator would be able to become the true master of the weapon by feeding it a droplet of his blood..."

"Become the true master?"

Sun Qiang widened his eyes in shock.

"Indeed... The artifacts on the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets are treasures that countless appraisers were unable to identify. To induce Spirit Euphoria right after he entered, could it be that... not only did he manage to identify the artifact, he even managed to analyze the strengths and flaws of it as well?"

Liu Chang's face was filled with disbelief.

"Analyze the strengths and flaws?"

"Every top-notch equipment is forged with a blacksmith's heart poured into it, but due to the limitations of material and the skill of the blacksmith, flaws will appear on even the most formidable treasures. As long as this kind of flaws is made up for, the equipment could reach higher tiers.

"An equipment possessing spirit is aware of its own flaws, but as it's unable to communicate with anyone, it's unable to find a way to make up for them. Some experts could easily find these flaws and earn the acknowledgement of the spirit of the equipment. However, this is a skill that only high-ranked blacksmiths possess. Why would it... appear in an appraisal?"

The more Liu Chang explained, the more confused he became.

The main responsibility of an appraiser was to determine the identity of an artifact and its background. As for the flaws and strengths of the artifact, that was beyond their means.

That was a skill that only skilled blacksmiths who had achieved a profound understanding of equipment would have.

Could it be that... the fellow inside wasn't just an appraiser but... a formidable blacksmith as well? Was that why he could easily identify the treasure and analyze its strengths and flaws?

Finally recovering from his shock, Elder Lu turned to his old friend and consoled, "The first artifact that appears happens to be an equipment. If he's a blacksmith, it's not too surprising for him to be able to identify it. However, an appraiser has to be more than capable of identifying weapons. Paintings, antiques, medicinal herbs, and even cultivation techniques and battle techniques... They must be well-rounded in all aspects. The ten artifacts of the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets cover the various occupations. If he's just a blacksmith, he'll only be able to identify the first one..."

Blacksmiths had an in-depth understanding of equipment. It wasn't completely impossible for Zhang Xuan to be capable of identifying an equipment swiftly, find its strengths and flaws, and win its acknowledgement.

However, it was a pity that the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets tested one on one's appraising ability, not on one's understanding of equipment.

The ten artifacts didn't just consist of equipment. There were many other items as well. No matter how knowledgeable Zhang Xuan was in the field of equipment, he would only be able to identify one.

Elder Lu was in the midst of consoling his old friend when they heard the plump man beside them muttering to himself, "Right, didn't Hall Master Sai say that he would have cleared the trial as long as he could recognize a single artifact?"

Elder Chen had just barely calmed down when he heard those words and his face paled once more. Internally, he could feel his heart bleeding.

There had been not a single success case to the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets in the past. As such, as long as one was able to identify even one of the ten artifacts, it would be considered as a pass... In other words, regardless of whether Zhang Xuan was able to identify any other artifacts or not, he would have to part with his three thousand spirit stones!

...

While a huge wave of shock had washed over the appraisers outside, in the trial, Zhang Xuan stared at the bizarre metal hammer speechlessly.

"What are you calling out for? You scared me!"

After jotting down the details on the artifact from the Library of Heaven's Path, this toy suddenly began buzzing, causing him to nearly drop his brush in shock.

What the heck was it?

It wasn't like it was a clock, gong, or something. What was it trying to call out for!

Don't you know what is manners? It's rude to shout in public,

you know!

'Forget it, I'll just write the names then...' Zhang Xuan thought.

There were seventy-two flaws on the Copper Hammer recorded in the Library of Heaven's Path, and if he were to jot down all of them, he would surely die of fatigue. Since he had written down its name, origin, and two to three of its flaws, it should be sufficient for a pass!

Putting down his brush, Zhang Xuan turned his gaze away from the Copper Hammer to wait for the arrival of the next artifact when 'hu!', the heavy lump of metal suddenly flew from the stream and landed right before him.

"What's going on?"

Zhang Xuan blinked in shock.

Why is a hammer like you jumping right in front of me instead of lying obediently on the tree leaf?

Just so you know, I'm not a female hammer!

"Forget it..."

Zhang Xuan was unable to comprehend the situation before him. However, since the previous tree leaf had already floated away and

the next artifact was slowly flowing down, Zhang Xuan shook his head and turned his attention away.

Placed on top of the second tree leaf was a painting. It was emitting a faint glow.

The spiritual energy in the surroundings were automatically attracted to the painting, and incredibly realistic birds flew into the air, dancing with liveliness.

"It's at least a fifth level painting!"

As a 3-star painter, Zhang Xuan still possessed some understanding of painting. Even though the artifact was still a far distance away from him, he could already see what was incredible about it. At the very least, its grade was no lower than the fifth level.

He activated his Eye of Insight.

However, just like the Copper Hammer, he wasn't able to tell anything at all. In other words, the painting's value had surpassed the ability of his Eye of Insight.

Soon, the leaf reached his surroundings, allowing him to catch a clearer glimpse of the painting.

The painting was exquisite, but there was no signature left behind, making it impossible to determine whose work it was.

The birds flying above the painting also looked extremely foreign. Of all of the savage beasts that Zhang Xuan learned about from beast taming books, there was none that fits the shape.

In other words, not only was there no name for the painting, it was even impossible to determine what those birds were.

It was no wonder why so many appraisers before were unable to identify it.

"Flaws!"

Upon coming into contact with the painting, Zhang Xuan began moving his brush excitedly.

...

"Teacher, after the Spirit Euphoria, it's highly likely that the artifact will automatically acknowledge Zhang Xuan as its owner. If so, on top of paying the five thousand spirit stones, that artifact will also have to..."

Upon recalling something, Liu Chang hurried over to Hall Master Sai and brought up the matter.

Artifacts possessing spirit were able to choose their owner as they pleased. In other words, through this Harmonious Stream of

Flowing Goblets, not only did Zhang Xuan earn five thousand spirit stones from clearing the trial and three thousand spirit stones from winning the wager against Elder Chen, perhaps... he would be taking away the equipment as well.

What in the world was this!

When other people challenged the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets, they ended up paying a hundred spirit stones. On the other hand, not only did this fellow earn a huge profit, he even managed to steal away the various treasures in it...

The Appraiser Hall was truly making a huge loss this time around.

"Artifacts have their own spirit, and they are allowed to choose their owners. Even though these artifacts have been with our Appraiser Hall for many years, no one has been able to identify them. Now that someone is able to point out their identity and origin, it's only natural for them to be excited and want to acknowledge the person as their master. There's nothing we can do about this!"

Hall Master Sai had also considered this matter, and he shook his head helplessly.

Every single treasure in the Appraiser Hall was incomparably valuable, and if possible, he didn't wish for any of them to get out. However, since the other party had earned the acknowledgement of the spirit of the weapon, there was nothing he could do.

Seeing that his teacher was helpless toward this situation as well, Liu Chang asked worriedly, "Then... What if this happens to the artifacts later on as well?"

"Hehe, don't worry! The first artifact is an equipment so blacksmiths or those who possess a natural affinity toward equipment would be able to win its acknowledgement easily. However, it'll be different for the artifacts behind. There are antiques, paintings, as well as medicinal herbs... It'll be impossible for him to identify all of those treasures. Besides, even if he does, it'll be extremely difficult for him to earn the acknowledgement of their spirit. It wouldn't be a joke to say that it is practically impossible!"

Hall Master Sai smiled lightly, "There's no need to worry so much."

"That's true!"

Liu Chang was taken aback for a moment before recovering. Nodding his head, he was just about to say something when the spiritual energy before him suddenly rippled intensely and gushed straight through the closed doors.

Following which, everyone's eyes blurred for a moment, and countless birds formed by spiritual energy danced and chirped in the air.

"The Call of the Spirit, Acknowledgement of the Painting? This is

a masterpiece painting acknowledging its owner?"

Hall Master Sai's vision went dark.

Chapter 460: Poor People Have It Rough

The first five levels to painting were: Reality Depiction, Spiritual Canvas, Infused Intentions, Breathtaking Verisimilitude, and Spirit Creation.

Upon reaching Spirit Creation, the beings within the painting would be able to absorb spiritual energy to reach higher levels. In fact, the entire painting would be granted spirit, and it would be able to find a suitable owner for itself.

In this sense, it was similar to formidable spirit equipment.

Before them, birds from a painting were formed by the gathering of spiritual energy, dancing and chirping energetically. Clearly, it had acknowledged the challenger within the trial.

This...

If it was an equipment or a person who possessed exceptionally affinity with equipment, the acknowledgement of the first artifact could be explained. However, it was completely different for a painting.

Painting was a refined sport, and it was the expertise of literati. No matter how strong one was, it would be difficult for one to earn the acknowledgement of a painting. The only way to earn its acknowledgement was to understand the true artistic conception contained within the painting and comprehend its true meaning.

But... for a painting which one didn't know the name, the content, or even the year of production... How could one possibly understand the intent behind it?

Could this fellow be a painter as well?

Only a true master in painting would be able to discern the thoughts of another painter in a painting that wasn't signed, sealed, or dated.

Everyone's eyes shot toward Sun Qiang, curious to hear his explanation.

Since this servant was so sure that his young master could pass the trial, he definitely knew a thing or two about it.

"Painter? Our young master is already one!"

Seeing the doubtful gazes from the crowd, Sun Qiang smiled gleefully. Placing his hands behind his back, he tilted his head upward proudly, "On top of that, he created a fifth level painting through a savage beast. To him, this is just a walk in the park!"

"Created a fifth level painting through a savage beast?"

Everyone's mouths twitched.

One would have to at least be a 3-star painter to create a fifth level painting. To do the same through a savage beast... How many stars would that require?

Even the 4-star painters that they knew weren't capable of such a feat!

"It just happens that he's knowledgeable in equipment and painting, this doesn't truly reflect his appraising proficiency. Perhaps... it might just be luck?" an appraiser amidst the crowd said.

However, after saying those words, putting aside whether there was anyone willing to believe his words, even he found his own words hard to believe.

Seeing how everyone was shocked speechless, and Elder Chen even seemed to be on the verge of collapsing, perhaps due to the sympathy he felt for his fellow appraisers, Hall Master Sai scanned the surroundings and said, "We'll know whether it's luck or not in the next artifact! If I'm not wrong, it should be a celestial treasure. These kinds of items appear randomly and no one can replicate them. No amount of prior knowledge of other occupations can help him on this... This is the purest form of appraisal!"

If it was truly luck, and Zhang Xuan had only happened to identify the first two artifacts due to his double identity as a blacksmith and painter, it would surely be impossible for him to do the same for the rest of the artifacts.

"I really do hope that he fails to identify the other artifacts. The artifacts in the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets are all incredible treasure left behind by the predecessors, and every single one of them can fetch an astronomical sum. Two of them have already recognized him as their master. If this goes on, I fear that... our Appraiser Hall will go bankrupt!" Elder Lu muttered pitifully.

"That... That's true!"

Hall Master Sai's mouth twitched as well.

Just identifying the artifact itself was sufficient for one to pass the trial, but this fellow went ahead and had the artifacts acknowledge him as their master... They had already lost two artifacts. If this were to go on, it would be a huge blow to the Appraiser Hall despite its affluence.

"Don't worry, I've challenged the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets before, and the third one is a celestial treasure."

Elder Chen finally managed to suppress his urge to spurt blood and gritted his teeth. "There are no records on what material it is made of, and it's even unclear as to whether it has a spirit or not. It'll be nearly impossible for one to identify it, needless to win, earn its acknowledgement..."

Celestial treasures were extremely rare in the world, and they weren't recorded in the books. As such, it was nearly impossible to call out their names. Furthermore, it was unclear whether it had a

spirit or not. Thus, it was nearly impossible to have it acknowledge one as its master.

However, as soon as he said those words, a chuckle sounded.

"You mean that our young master won't be able to identify the object and earn its acknowledgement?"

The one who spoke was still Sun Qiang.

"Hmph!" Elder Chen flung his sleeves.

"There's no need for you to get displeased. How about this? I'll give you a chance to earn back your money. Let's continue to wager three thousand spirit stones; if our young master is unable to identify what the object is and earn its acknowledgement, we'll call off the debt. Otherwise, you'll owe me another three thousand spirit stones. How about it?"

Sun Qiang stared at Elder Chen with glowing eyes.

"I..."

Elder Chen's lips quivered. He wanted to agree to it but he didn't dare to do so.

He had just said that it was impossible for the other party to pass the trial but the fellow went ahead to earn the acknowledgement

of two of the artifacts. Who knows what would happen this time?

"You're chickening out again? I'm giving you a chance but you sure don't know how to make use of it. With guts like yours, I truly wonder how you can call yourself a 4-star appraiser and a Transcendent Mortal expert!" Sun Qiang glanced at Elder Chen disdainfully.

"You..." Not expecting to be looked down by a servant twice in just a few short minutes, Elder Chen's face flushed red, and he looked as though he would faint from anger at any moment.

"Enough!"

At that moment, another fatty walked out from Sun Qiang's back and bellowed.

Seeing someone stepping out to speak up for him, Elder Chen heaved a sigh of relief. He was just about to thank the other party when he heard the other party's words, "You've to consider matters from Elder Chen's perspective as well. What if he doesn't have sufficient money to pay you back if, by chance, he loses? Butler Sun, you should learn to be more understanding. It isn't easy for him either. Poor people have it rough, you know... This can't be helped at all."

Pu!

After hearing those words, Elder Chen spurted another mouthful

of blood.

At this moment, he was completely frenzied.

Appraiser was one of the most lucrative occupation in the world. As a 4-star appraiser, he was one of the top of the trade. Even though his wealth couldn't be said to be able to compare up to an entire nation, he wasn't too far from it.

Yet, someone was publicly saying that... he was poor.

Poor your head!

"Fine, let's wager then! Who's afraid of whom..." Unable to hold back his rage, Elder Chen bellowed.

"That's a promise then. However... what if you don't have any money to repay your debt after you lose?" Sun Qiang shot his accomplice, Yuan Tao, a look of approval and chuckled.

"I'll borrow it from Elder Lu then, there's no need for you to worry about that!" Elder Chen flung his sleeves.

"Elder Chen... You should reconsider the matter!"

Elder Lu's eyebrows twitched, and he hurriedly stepped forward to persuade the other party against it.

"Don't worry, I don't believe that that fellow can even identify a celestial treasure. If he really is able to do so, I'll just admit my misfortune..." Elder Chen clenched his jaws tightly.

As a 4-star appraiser, he wasn't a reckless person. However, the two fatties before him were simply too infuriating.

Besides, he truly believed that it would be impossible for that young man to identify a celestial treasure.

One must know that this artifact that stumped even a passing 5-star appraiser. How could a fellow who popped out from nowhere possibly know anything about it, let alone earn its acknowledgement?

Weng!

While he was still immersed in his thoughts, a crisp buzz sounded from the room. It was similar to the call from before.

"The Acknowledgement of a Treasure, Spirit Euphoria... He was acknowledged by the celestial treasure?"

Elder Chen's face paled, and he suddenly burst into tears.

To be able to win even the acknowledgement of a celestial treasure, what kind of monster was the other party? How in the world did he manage to do it?

Ding dong!

However, he wasn't stunned for too long. Various sounds echoed from within soon afterward. It didn't feel as though Zhang Xuan was in a trial; rather, it felt as though he was in a music room, and various melodies mixed in with one another.

"Hall master... I think we should forcefully terminate the trial!"

Hearing the various sounds within, Elder Lu couldn't hold himself back anymore and suggested.

"Terminate?"

"If we don't terminate it now, I fear that... our Appraiser Hall might be shut down by him..."

Elder Lu's lips twitched.

"This..."

Hall Master Sai's face steeled.

It would be formidable if anyone else can recognize one out of ten artifacts, yet not only did this fellow manage to identify all of them, he even won their acknowledgement in the midst of doing so...

If he were to continue on like this, he might really make a clean sweep of the treasures within the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets.

"You should quickly make up your mind! If he continues on like this, and claims all of the artifacts, what should we do in the future? Let's just terminate it now. In any case, he has passed the trial already anyway!"

Knowing that there was no time to be wasted, Elder Lu urged Sai Xiaoyu.

"Alright, let's have him stop now then!"

Knowing the severity of the matter, Hall Master Sai clenched his jaws.

Initially, he thought that the other party only visited the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets out of curiosity, and he would give up once he realized its difficulty. Who could have known that he would make the artifacts submit to him in an instant...

Seeing so many valuable treasures submitting to him, they were scared out of their wits. They didn't dare to allow him to proceed on with the trial.

Even though the Appraisal Hall was known for its affluence and

immense collection of treasures, there was still a limit to it.

And the treasures that no one had been able to identify in the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets were the height of the collection.

They could accept having one or two being taken away, but if it were all of them, then the overall fortune of the Appraisal Hall would be reduced immensely.

What in the world was this?

For the Appraisal Hall to be forced to a corner by just an individual, the thought of it felt ludicrous in itself. Yet, it was happening at this very instant.

"Fetch the keys!"

Since there was a way to activate the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets, naturally, there was a way to stop it as well. However, similar to the activation process, it required the usage of three of the keys simultaneously as well.

"Alright!"

Elder Chen and Elder Lu hurriedly walked up to the wall, and stretching out their hands, they placed their keys into the apertures.

Jiya! Jiya!

Along with the insertion of the three keys, the formation immediately rumbled to a halt.

The radiance slowly faded.

"What... are you all doing?" Sun Qiang frowned.

"Don't worry, we've only stopped the formation. This won't hurt your young master at all!" Hall Master Sai said.

"To stop the formation because you can't afford to lose, the Appraisal Hall... sure is shameless!" Sun Qiang harrumphed.

Even though he hadn't heard their exchange, the meaning behind their actions was clear.

Clearly, they were scared of the young master taking away all of the artifacts inside so they didn't dare allow the trial to continue on any further.

"Cough cough, it's indeed our fault to forcefully terminate the trial. However, there's no need to worry. I'll make it up to your young master!"

Mocked in public, Hall Master Sai's face turned red.

It was just as the other party had said, these treasures were left behind by their predecessors and they were necessary to conducting the 5-star appraiser examination. As such, they truly couldn't afford to lose them.

However, forcefully terminating the trial like that was unfair to the other party as well. Thus, the Appraisal Hall could only find some way to make up for the other party's losses.

"Hmph!"

Sun Qiang harrumphed in displeasure. However, the formation was already stopped, and there was no way around it anymore.

"Alright, open the door!"

Once the formation was stopped, the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets would automatically cease to operate, and the artifacts wouldn't appear anymore. Relieved, Hall Master Sai shook his hands with a smile.

Boom!

But at that moment, the ground shook, and everyone nearly fell down. After which, a thunderous chime reverberated within the room, leaving everyone nearly deaf.

"It's... the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets acknowledging its master. The heck!"

Hall Master Sai looked at the door and bellowed frenziedly.

Chapter 461: Compensation

Returning back to a minute earlier.

After four consecutive treasures had leaped off the tree leaves and flown to him, no matter how foolish Zhang Xuan was, it was clear that these artifacts had acknowledged him and wanted to leave with him.

After all, treasures were crafted with a purpose in mind and they craved to display their value.

Being trapped within the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets for a time so long that swords were buried in dust and pearls lost their glow had left these artifacts' spirits indignant.

As such, as soon as they were identified, they immediately submitted to Zhang Xuan.

"I won't hold back then!"

His mouth slowly curled out as he stretched out his hand and swiftly kept the treasures who leaped off the leaves into his storage ring.

Even though Zhang Xuan wasn't very knowledgeable about treasures, he could tell that they were valuable based on their descriptions in the Library of Heaven's Path. In any case, they were definitely worth more than a few hundred spirit stones.

He would be insane to turn down these valuable treasures.

After putting away those objects, while he was waiting for the next artifact to appear, the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets suddenly shook and stopped. The flow of water also abruptly halted.

"Could it be that... this artifact has something wrong with it as well?"

Zhang Xuan frowned.

The Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets was driven by a formation, and logically speaking, its flow shouldn't stop until all ten of the artifacts appeared. Why did it suddenly stop when only four had appeared?

"Let me see if I can fix this!"

Doubtful, Zhang Xuan stretched out his hands and touched the stone pedestal.

The Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets should be similar to the various trials of the master teacher examination. Most likely, it was a Spirit tool used to control the water flow and protect the treasures.

Since it came to an abrupt stop, it probably meant that it was malfunctioning. However, Zhang Xuan wasn't worried at all. After all, he had the Library of Heaven's Path. As long as it was a flaw or loophole, he could easily determine the problem and find a solution to it.

Hu!

A book appeared, and browsing through it, he picked up his brush and started writing some words down.

"The Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets is a Spirit low-tier tool, and it's a part of the Appraiser Hall..."

Right after writing just a few flaws, a buzzing sound echoed and the entire place began to shake, as though expressing its intimacy toward Zhang Xuan.

"This toy can be taken away as well?"

Sensing that the attitude of the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets was similar to that of the artifacts he identified before, Zhang Xuan was astonished.

If he could take the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets away, didn't it mean that he could claim all of the treasures here in one go?

"Let's give it a try then!"

Chuckling softly, Zhang Xuan issued the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets a command, and as he expected, it didn't try to resist him at all.

'Hu!'

The entire tool was placed inside his storage ring.

"What the heck?! It really worked..."

The edges of Zhang Xuan's lips crept upward. Just as he was about to see if there was anything else of value in the room...

'Jiya!'

The door opened abruptly and Hall Master Sai, Elder Lu, and Elder Chen rushed in.

"Yo-you..."

"You took the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets as well..."

Upon seeing the empty room, the lips of the three 4-star appraisers quivered. They stared at the young man before them as if he was a monster.

Are you sure you're here to challenge the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets and not to sweep away everything within it...

A moment ago, there were still mountains, flowing water, flowers... But all that was left now was an empty room devoid of anything.

You aren't here to challenge the trial but to take away everything of value in the Appraiser Hall!

"Zhang shi, the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets is... property of the Appraiser Hall. It represents our prestige and dignity, I beseech you to leave it behind..."

Holding back the urge to spurt blood, Hall Master Sai uttered with a scarlet face.

It was just a moment ago that he addressed Zhang Xuan as Brother Zhang, but at this moment, he didn't dare to do so anymore.

Not only did the other party manage to claim so many treasures in a single move, he even took away the operating table as well. The other party's mastery of appraisal was definitely way above of his... He was no longer qualified to call the other party brother anymore.

"Leave it behind? But it has willingly chosen to acknowledge me as its master!" Zhang Xuan glared at the other party.

You must be joking! How much do you think these treasures are worth? How can I simply leave them behind?

"That... I know!" Hall Master Sai's face was flushed.

The ownership of artifacts usually hinged on a single word — affinity.

All of these artifacts had acknowledged Zhang Xuan as their master, and this showed that he had affinity with them all. As an appraiser, Sai Xiaoyu should be more than aware of this. If he were to force the other party to hand it over, that would be no different from stealing.

But... the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets was one of the most valuable treasures of their Appraiser Hall so they couldn't afford to lose it. Otherwise, even before the headquarters dismissed him, he would probably have to resign from his seat for the discontentment of the other appraisers in the hall.

It was just like someone claiming and taking away the Spirit tool used to operate the various tests in the Master Teacher Pavilion.

If word were to spread out, the Master Teacher Pavilion would surely become a laughingstock.

After a moment of hesitation, Hall Master Sai said, "How about this, as long as Zhang shi is willing to leave the Harmonious

Stream of Flowing Goblets behind, the Appraiser Hall is willing to... compensate your losses!"

"Compensate? You wish to pay me spirit stones? I'm fine with it!"

Zhang Xuan started counting on his fingers, "The Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets contains ten artifacts. I won't demand too much so I'll go by the estimate of five thousand spirit stones for each of them. Totaling them up, it's only fifty thousand spirit stones! As for this operating platform... I'll take it to be ten thousand then! Thus, as long as the Appraiser Hall pays me sixty thousand spirit stones, I'll return everything back to you!"

"Sixty thousand spirit stones..."

The three appraisers trembled and their eyes turned red.

They were the Appraiser Hall, not a bank... Besides, even if they were the bank, they wouldn't be able to fork out so many spirit stones either.

"This... We truly aren't able to take out so many spirit stones at the moment..." Hall Master Sai felt so embarrassed that he wished that there was a hole in the floor that he could dive into at this very moment.

What the heck was this.

When no one was able to clear the Harmonious Stream of

Flowing Goblets, he wished that some challenger could simply overcome it. Yet, now that someone had succeeded, he found himself on the verge of tears, wishing that it was just a dream...

"You can't take it out? Alright then. If you all can take out the following items, I'm willing to fork out the items in return!"

Seeing the tearful faces of the three great 4-star appraisers, Zhang Xuan knew that it was impossible for them to fork out so many spirit stones. Thus, after a moment of hesitation, he proposed, "Firstly, help me find as many Transcendent Mortal cultivation techniques and battle techniques as possible, the more the better. Other than that, I want the Soulless Metal Humanoid and all books related to soul oracles. Similarly, the more there are, the better it is!"

Actually, Zhang Xuan didn't really need the treasures within the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets.

If he really wanted to earn spirit stones, there were various means for him to do so.

There were only two priorities for him at the moment. The first was to find a way to wake up Lu Chong's dormant soul and bring him out of his coma, and the second was to raise his cultivation and advance through the master teacher ranks so that he could become a 9-star master teacher before reaching thirty.

Treasures and spirit stones were just means to these ends.

"This..."

He thought that the other party would say something overboard, and upon hearing that he only needed these few items, Hall Master Sai was taken aback.

Even though they were the Appraiser Hall, they still had quite a decent collection of Transcendent Mortal cultivation techniques and battle techniques.

And as for books on soul oracle, even though this occupation no longer existed and there were many contentions regarding its existence, the Appraiser Hall still had a few books on the occupation... Just that, it was hard to gauge whether the information was true or not.

Honestly speaking, these items... weren't worth much. There was no comparison between them and those treasures in the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets.

Having witnessed the greed of the other party for himself, he thought that the other party would be willing to stoop to even unscrupulous means to earn spirit stones. Since he had earned the upper hand this time, he thought that the other party would raise some outrageous request that would cause the Appraiser Hall's bankruptcy. Yet, to think that... it would be just these few items.

This... Was there a problem somewhere?

Seeing the bewildered faces before him, Zhang Xuan asked, "What, can't you do it?"

"I can find a few of the others, but regarding the Soulless Metal Humanoid... As it doesn't belong to the Appraiser Hall - someone is just keeping it with us at the moment for the auction - I can't say for sure how it'll be auctioned and how much it'll be auctioned for!" Hall Master Sai said.

The figure he had given for the Soulless Metal Humanoid before was just a rough estimate. Even if the Appraiser Hall were to speak on Zhang Xuan's behalf, it was hard to tell whether the seller would be willing to sell it to him. Thus, they couldn't give their word on this matter.

But of course, this was just a conservative way of putting it. In comparison to other powers in the region, the influence of the Appraiser Hall was immense. On top of that, the item was to be auctioned on their territory. If even the Appraiser Hall couldn't get it, it would be even more unlikely for others to lay their hands on it.

After a moment of contemplation, Zhang Xuan said, "There's no problem about that. Didn't you say that the clearing the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets would entitle me to a reward of five thousand spirit stones? I'll bid for it myself! You just have to gather the other things that I asked for. The quantity for each of those books mustn't be any less than a thousand!"

"A thousand books?"

Hall Master Sai's face went pale.

He thought that the other party was just asking for a few dozen books. To ask for a thousand of them in one go, what did he wish to do with them?

He thought that the other party was letting the Appraiser Hall go by not insisting on the sixty thousand spirit stones, but it seemed like things weren't as easy as he thought.

"Books on soul oracles are rare even when considering the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance. At best, we'll just only be able to find... a few dozen of them. As for Transcendent Mortal cultivation technique manuals, if it's only Transcendent Mortal 1-dan Prolonged Longevity realm manuals, I think we'll still be able to find above a thousand of it."

"But for 2-dan Origin Energy realm, the quantity is significantly lower. My estimate is that we'll only be able to find around five hundred of them. As for 3-dan Yin-Yang realm, while there are a lot of them in the Myriad Kingdom City, in Honghai City... it'll already be great if we can gather a hundred of them!"

Doing a rough estimate, Hall Master Sai explained the circumstances for each of the items.

Even though the Honghai City was a massive city in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, it was still inferior as compared to that of the Myriad Kingdom City. As such, it wasn't as easy to gather over a

thousand manuals here.

This was especially so for Transcendent Mortal 3-dan cultivation technique manuals. Even if one were to search through all of the powerful clans in the city, it would be hard to find a hundred of them. On top of that, every single clan valued their manual as their greatest treasure and they didn't allow it to go out into the public. Even if the Appraiser Hall were to exert its influence, it would be hard to gather them.

"That's fine as well. I'll take whatever that's available, so go ahead and look for them!"

Knowing that he was limited by the geographic boundaries and that it was already great if he could gather this much here, Zhang Xuan nodded and agreed to it. Then, flicking his wrist, he took out the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets.

He was willing to return this to the other party, but as for the other four artifacts that had already acknowledged him, they shouldn't even think about it.

"Thank you Zhang shi!"

Hall Master Sai heaved a sigh of relief and clasped his fist.

"Don't worry about it. Alright, I would like to get the five thousand spirit stones from clearing the trial now!"

Zhang Xuan waved his hands.

"Un, I'll go get it for you now!" Hall Master Sai walked out. Not too long later, he returned, and with a flick of his wrist, a bunch of spirit stones appeared in front of him. The spiritual energy in the surroundings immediately rippled, forming a mini tornado.

Scanning through it and confirming that there were around five thousand spirit stones in the pile, Zhang Xuan chuckled and put it all away in his storage ring.

After keeping the items away, Zhang Xuan was about to say something when Sun Qiang walked up and said, "Young master, this Elder Chen has just lost to us in a bet and he owes us six thousand spirit stones!"

"Bet? Six thousand spirit stones?"

Taken aback, Zhang Xuan turned to the elder and exclaimed, "To offer six thousand spirit stones in a single go, Elder Chen, you are indeed much more generous than Hall Master Sai!"

"Generous?" Elder Chen cried.

How was this generosity? How did it feel more like suicide...

Chapter 462: Celestial Designer's Mechanical Container

From Sun Qiang's explanation, it didn't take long before Zhang Xuan understood the happenings of the entire incident.

"Not bad, you did well. The only thing pitiable is that the number of spirit stones at stake were too few. No matter what, it should be at least ten thousand!"

Not expecting for Sun Qiang to perform so excellently, earning so many spirit stones for him through a wager, Zhang Xuan looked at him in commendation.

"Ten thousand!"

Elder Chen's lips twitched once more.

Six thousand was sufficient to leave him so frustrated that he felt like committing suicide already. If the debt was truly ten thousand, he would have already run away.

"Since I've the wager, I won't refuse to pay up. However..." Stepping forward, Elder Chen gritted his teeth and said, "My total fortune only adds up to around three thousand spirit stones. As for the rest... Can you allow me to repay it back in a year's time?"

"A year's time? A year later, it would be useless even if you were

to give me twenty thousand spirit stones!"

Zhang Xuan shook his head.

It had only been two to three months since his journey started in Tianxuan Kingdom. A year later... He could foresee that three thousand spirit stones would just be an insignificant sum to him.

"I..."

Elder Chen's face flushed red.

As a Transcendent Mortal 3-dan expert and a 4-star appraiser, he was a respectable figure. If he were to refuse to pay up after losing a wager, even if the other party didn't do anything at all, he would die from the humiliation.

Besides, if his trustworthiness was brought into question, his career as an appraiser might come to an end.

Thus, after hesitating for a moment, he clenched his jaws and said, "Even though I don't have many liquid assets, as a 4-star appraiser, I do have some treasures in my possession... How about this, I'll allow you to pick any item among my treasure as compensation for the three thousand spirit stones!"

Appraisers were very similar to antique collectors. Even though they might not have many liquid assets, they had quite a valuable inventory in their home.

These items were treasures that he had slowly accumulated over the course of his life. If not for being forced into a corner, he would never bear to take them out.

"Treasure? Let me take a look. If it's suitable, I can strike off your entire debt of six thousand spirit stones for it!"

Knowing that this person would surely have some valuable possessions having dealt in artifacts his entire life, Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

"Alright!"

Knowing that it was impossible to avoid this anymore, Elder Chen flicked his wrist.

Hualala!

Before long, a pile of treasures appeared before the crowd.

There were antiques, paintings, weapons, sets of armor, as well as some bizarre clay molds.

There were all kinds of treasures within Elder Chen's collection, and astonishingly, its total value seemed to exceed even that of the shops on the second floor.

"I only have these, feel free to choose..."

Elder Chen forcefully put on a generous front and gestured.

These were his prized possession, and he couldn't bear to part with any single one of them. However, what else could he do having lost the wager?

It simply wasn't worth shattering the reputation that he'd built up over the course of so many years due to a wager.

"Let me take a look!"

Activating the Eye of Insight, Zhang Xuan began browsing through the various artifacts on the ground.

A moment later, he shook his head in disappointment.

Most of these items were rare and valuable but to Zhang Xuan, they didn't hold much meaning.

In contrast to these items, spirit stones were much more practical to him.

Zhang Xuan turned to look at Elder Chen helplessly and said, "You only collected these few useless toys over the course of your entire life?"

"I..." Elder Chen's face flushed in embarrassment. Knowing that the other party was a grandmaster appraiser and his eye for things exceeded even that of the hall master, he couldn't protest at all.

He had treasured these possessions as though they were his own children, yet the other party viewed them as nothing but useless toys. He couldn't help but feel slightly awkward.

"Elder Chen, why don't you take out that object that you obtained just a while ago? If... Zhang shi likes it, he might even trade it for six thousand spirit stones."

Just when Elder Chen was at a loss, he heard Elder Lu's telepathic message.

"That object?"

Recalling something, Elder Chen hesitated for a moment before nodding his head. Turning to Zhang Xuan, he said, "Zhang shi, please hold on for a moment. I have an object that I've been unable to identify ever since I received it. I'll bring it over now. If even that doesn't interest you, then I've nothing else to offer you anymore!"

"Alright!"

Hearing that the other party still had another treasure, Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

He wasn't in a hurry anyway.

Elder Chen turned around to leave, and around half an hour later, he returned, and with a flick of his wrist, a black object appeared before him.

It was a fist-sized black sphere, and no matter how one looked at it, it seemed to be nothing more than an ordinary ball of lead.

"You call this a treasure?"

Sun Qiang took a glance at it and protested, "Elder Chen, aren't you trying to take advantage of us if you wish to use this to call off the entire debt?"

"I..." Elder Chen's face flushed.

"You're misunderstanding Elder Chen!" Hall Master Sai said. "This object was dug up from an ancient tomb ten years ago, and even though it doesn't seem like anything much, it's invulnerable. We've tried quenching, burning, slashing, and smashing but nothing could leave a mark on it. We've studied it innumerable times but we weren't able to determine what it is."

"Since you don't know what it is, how can you say that it's a treasure?" Sun Qiang refuted.

"You can't really put it that way. It could be possible that it is an ore that no one has ever seen before. If one used it to craft a

weapon, one would surely be able to forge a top-notch weapon," Hall Master Sai said.

"Use it to forge a weapon? Putting aside whether it's possible or not, it'll surely be a troublesome and lengthy process..." Sun Qiang harrumphed.

"Enough. Allow me to take a look at it first!"

Interrupting Butler Sun's words, Zhang Xuan stepped forward.

He had tried to examine the metal ball with the Eye of Insight, but to his astonishment, he realized that he was unable to see anything about it.

In his time in the Appraiser Hall, he learned that the true treasures were among the objects that he couldn't see through with his Eye of Insight.

Thus, he grabbed the ball and muttered 'flaws' internally.

Hu!

A book appeared in the library. Zhang Xuan quickly flipped it open.

"Celestial Designer's Mechanical Container, forged by the Celestial Designer Institute with complex mechanical systems. It

can't be opened without knowing the specific sequences required to do so. It's likely that some important treasure is hidden within it. Flaws..."

After which were the various flaws of the object.

"There are only seventeen flaws?"

Even though the Library of Heaven's Path didn't label the value of the object and Zhang Xuan had never heard of the Celestial Designer Institute, he was still astounded by the number of flaws contained in the object.

The flaws that the Library of Heaven's Path could detect ranged from the material of the object to the technique used to craft it, covering nearly all fields possible.

Take the first artifact from the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets, the Copper Hammer, for example, even though the Eye of Insight couldn't determine any problem with it, the Library of Heaven's Path was still able to find a total of seventy-two flaws.

But of course, it didn't mean that the fewer flaws there were, the more valuable an artifact would be. It was also related to the complexity of the artifact.

The more complex an artifact was, the more likely it was that there would be flaws in it.

This object was known as the Celestial Designer's Mechanical Container, and based on its description, it was clear that there was a system far more complex than the Copper Hammer contained within it.

Yet, despite being more complex than the Copper Hammer, there were so few mistakes with it. Didn't that mean that the value of this object far surpassed that of the Copper Hammer?

Treasure!

This was definitely a treasure!

"Zhang shi, are you able to determine what this artifact is?"

Seeing that Zhang Xuan had examined the object for a long time already, Elder Chen couldn't help but ask out of curiosity.

Hall Master Sai and Elder Lu also turned over as well.

They had studied this artifact for many years, and they had utilized all means available to them to examine it. However, they were still unable to come to a conclusion. The fellow before him had such a great appraising ability that he could even earn the acknowledgement of the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets. Perhaps, he might really be able to see through it.

"I'm not able to tell what it is exactly as well so I might require some more time to examine it."

Understanding the logic of keeping one's wealth a secret, Zhang Xuan chose to hide the matter. After a moment of hesitation, he said, "Alright, even though I'm unable to determine what this artifact is, I think that there's something deeper to it as well. I'll trade this for six thousand spirit stones then. What do you think of it?"

"Fine!"

Not expecting that this artifact could replace the six thousand spirit stones, Elder Chen heaved a long sigh of relief. At the same time, he secretly sneaked a glance at the plump servant.

The one that he wagered with was this fellow. Would he protest to such a decision?

As a master teacher, Zhang shi should still pay some consideration to his reputation. Even if this artifact wasn't worth the price, he wouldn't pursue the matter in the future. However, this servant was different.

He was afraid that the other party would continue arguing with him. If that was the case, he would be put in truly tight a spot.

However, after taking a glance, he saw the plump servant standing quietly at the side, not interfering in his young master's decisions at all.

"It seems like he respects his young master quite a lot!"

Seeing that the plump servant had decided to stay out of this matter, the tenseness finally left Elder Chen's body.

In truth, even though part of the reason why Sun Qiang didn't speak up was out of respect for Zhang Xuan, the main reason was because he knew that the young master was smarter than him and would never allow himself to be on the losing side of a deal. Since the young master was willing to purchase this ball for six thousand spirit stones, it could only mean that its value was way beyond that amount.

Since that was the case, why should he interfere in the matter?

"I've already sent some men to gather the books that you want. It'll probably take around three days!"

Seeing Zhang Xuan keep the ball into his ring, Hall Master Sai chuckled, "The auction is about to start. Shall we go over?"

All in all, the time they had spent here totaled up to nearly two hours. Judging from the time, it was indeed about time for the auction to start.

If they were to head over immediately, they would barely make it for the opening.

"Alright!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

The main goal of his journey here was the Soulless Metal Humanoid. It was imperative that he attended the auction so that he could obtain the item.

Thus, under Hall Master Sai's lead, the group hurriedly headed to the auction hall.

The auction hall was located on the second floor, not too far away from the First Class Pavilion. Before the group even reached the auction hall, they could already see a huge crowd gathering outside.

It seemed like the items offered in the auction were extremely attractive. There were many powerful and affluent individuals and powers here.

Activating the Eye of Insight, Zhang Xuan swept across the crowd and saw dozens of Transcendent Mortal experts. In fact, most of them had reached 2-dan and 3-dan.

As expected of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. The number of experts were indeed incredible.

"Isn't the auction hall operated by the Appraiser Hall?"

Following behind Hall Master Sai, the group managed to enter the venue without any hiccups. Not too long later, they arrived at a relatively large suite. At this moment, Zhang Xuan couldn't help

but raise a question.

They were in the Appraiser Hall, so logically speaking, the auction hall should belong to them as well. Yet, why did they require an invitation letter to enter the venue?

Could it be that the Appraiser Hall didn't have a stake in the auction hall?

"No, the auction hall isn't operated by us. It's similar to the First Class Pavilion; it's only in a working relationship with the Appraiser Hall. We're in charge of appraising their artifacts while they are responsible for finding buyers and customers to conduct the auction... After all, we don't have sufficient manpower and energy to manage all of these miscellaneous affairs!" Hall Master Sai answered.

The strength of an appraiser lay in appraising and determining the value of an artifact. As such, they might not be as adept at running a business.

Thus, it was much better to leave it to the veteran merchants instead.

Chapter 463: The Auction Begins

"No wonder..."

Zhang Xuan shook his head.

If this auction hall was operated by them, they would have been able to arrange a meeting between him and the buyer; his chances of getting the Soulless Metal Humanoid would've been much higher.

"Have you all appraised the Soulless Metal Humanoid? May I know the story behind it?"

Since the auction hadn't begun yet, Zhang Xuan asked about the Soulless Metal Humanoid.

After receiving the five thousand spirit stones reward, he'd repaid the loan he borrowed from Hall Master Sai and compensated him with an additional hundred spirit stones.

Thus, he had a total of 4800 spirit stones on hand at the moment. Even though Hall Master Sai was rather confident that it was sufficient for him to take away the Soulless Metal Humanoid, Zhang Xuan still felt that he should listen to the details to make a judgement himself.

"Alright!"

Hall Master Sai nodded. "Around a month ago, an elder came to the Appraiser Hall and requested that I appraise an artifact. The artifact seems to have been forged out of gold, and it's shaped like a puppet. After much assessment and contemplation, I determined that it is the legendary Soulless Metal Humanoid. I sought Elder Lu and Elder Chen's opinions on the matter before coming to a final verdict!

"That metal humanoid is incomparably resilient, and most probably, it was crafted by having a human swallow metal while they were still alive before proceeding to use a special secret art to forge the puppet. Its body is wholesome, thus preventing the slightest bit of aura from leaking out. A formation is constructed within its body, and one can control it through spirit stones. In terms of strength, it possesses a might comparable to a Transcendent Mortal 3-dan expert."

"While they were alive... Was the Soulless Metal Humanoid crafted out of real human bodies?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He had only heard about soul oracles from Pavilion Master Luo so he wasn't too sure about the details. When he heard about the Soulless Metal Humanoid, he thought that it would be a man-made object just like those puppets he met in the Master Teacher Pavilion when he was taking the master teacher examination. However, Sai Xiaoyu's words seemed to hint at something very different.

"Of course it isn't. Man-made puppets, just like other crafted tools, will gain spirit over time. As such, it's impossible for a human's soul to delve in it. Even if one managed to do it, one's

control over the puppet would still be lacking. This is similar to weapons and armor; even though they are convenient to use, one still isn't able to manipulate it as easily as one's own limbs." Hall Master Sai said.

Zhang Xuan nodded.

No matter how adept one was in using tools, it could never match up to the level of control one had over one's own limbs. A man-made puppet followed the same rule as well. Even if one could drive it with one's soul, one wouldn't be able to move it as seamlessly as one's own body.

"However, the Soulless Metal Humanoid is different. It's crafted using the body of a living human coated with metal. Not only is its defensive and offensive capability impressive, more importantly... it can contain a soul perfectly, making it easy for a cultivator to drive it. Legend has it that even though soul oracles had outstanding control over their souls, their physical bodies were extremely weak. As such, they possessed such powerful physical bodies with their souls to grant them immense power, thus making them a subject of fear." Hall Master Sai explained.

Zhang Xuan finally came to a realization, and he was astounded.

To craft a living human into a puppet to protect oneself... This occupation sure was bizarre and vile.

"The reputation of soul oracles was put alongside poison masters in ancient times, they were the two most feared occupations. It is

said that soul oracles, with their powerful souls, could forcibly extract a cultivator's soul from his body and forge a Soulless Metal Humanoid through their empty body. In fact, some of the more powerful soul oracles were even able to create a fearsome army of metal humanoids."

Hall Master Sai continued, "This was the reason why it was struck down by the other occupations. The Master Teacher Pavilion personally led the other occupations on a crusade against it and destroyed the soul oracles, thus terminating their heritage. I only learned of the existence of the Soulless Metal Humanoid by flipping through innumerable ancient books. Otherwise, I would have probably just thought of it as an ordinary puppet."

Suppressing his anxiety, Zhang Xuan asked, "I heard that this occupation... possesses the ability to wake dormant souls. May I know if it's true?"

Even though Luo Qianhong was a 3-star master teacher, his knowledge of this subject was definitely inferior to Hall Master Sai. Thus, Hall Master Sai's evaluation was likely to be much more accurate.

"The soul is a very complicated and profound subject. Only 7-star master teachers would begin to dabble in the subject. Otherwise, no matter how strong one was, even if one were a Transcendent Mortal 9-dan pinnacle expert, one wouldn't dare to touch in this field. The only exception to this rule are the soul oracles! Those of this occupation could even extract the soul from a living body, so waking a dormant soul should be a simple feat to them." Hall Master Sai replied with a grim expression.

Upon hearing the other party confirm the matter, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief.

"Alright, the auction is starting!"

While the duo was speaking, a commotion had sounded below. Turning around to take a look, the host was already on the stage.

Taking a closer look, the host was no other than Elder Chen.

As a 4-star appraiser, an elder of the Appraiser Hall, his words felt more credible and persuasive, and in such auctions, trust was an important factor to hiking up the prices.

"The items on auction today cover weapons, armors, antiques, paintings, celestial treasures, the ancient Soulless Metal Humanoid, and such, totaling up to a number of 35 artifacts. Every single one of them has been approved by the Appraiser Hall, and we can guarantee their authenticity."

Elder Chen's gaze swept across the crowd with majesty.

As soon as he reached the stage, he turned into that indomitable 4-star appraiser. Not a hint of that fellow who was forced to a corner by Sun Qiang and ended up spurting blood about remained.

"35 artifacts? So many?"

"Of course, the auction of the Appraiser Hall is only conducted once a year. As such, all of the artifacts put up for sale are invaluable treasures!"

"I've prepared a very long time for this auction, there are some things among the 35 artifacts that I'm determined to get..."

...

After hearing the introduction, the crowd fell into a commotion.

The auction was around the size of an ordinary sparring field. People of Hall Master Sai's standing were allocated a suite whereas ordinary customers were seated below.

Some of these people were itinerant cultivators, and some of them were guests of prestigious clans as well. In any case, all of them had prepared a long time for this auction, determined to obtain the object of their desire.

Looking through the window, Hall Master Sai commented, "It seems like the allure of the Soulless Metal Humanoid is great. There are many experts here!"

"Indeed!" Jin Conghai nodded in agreement.

He was a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan expert, and he had followed

the alliance head for quite a period of time. As such, he knew most of the reputable experts in the alliance.

Even though this auction was conducted in Honghai City, scanning across the room, he could see many experts whose strength was on par with him, some exceeding him even.

It was impossible for so many powerful experts to be gathered in an ordinary auction. Most likely, they were all here for the Soulless Metal Humanoid.

"I'm afraid that three thousand spirit stones might be insufficient to take down the Soulless Metal Humanoid!"

Hall Master Sai smiled bitterly after scanning the room.

His previous judgement was that the metal humanoid should be only worth around 1500 spirit stones. Even if the price doubles due to the heated atmosphere in an auction, it'll only cost around 3000 spirit stones. However, considering the number of experts that were here for it, it probably wouldn't be easy to win the bid at that price.

"Let's wait and see then! If I really don't have sufficient money, I'll be depending on Hall Master Sai to loan me some then!" Zhang Xuan chuckled.

"Ah..." Hall Master Sai rolled his eyes. To think this fellow hadn't forgotten that matter yet.

"Everyone, please remain silent. The auction will be starting now. I'll be bringing up the first item now!"

After allowing everyone to vent their astonishment, Elder Chen smiled in delight and gestured grandly.

Huala!

A stone pedestal below slowly rose up, revealing a narrow and long jade box.

Opening the jade box, a transparent plant appeared before everyone's eyes. It exuded a bone-chilling frost that seemed to reach straight into one's soul. Even when looking at it from afar, the crowd couldn't help but feel as though they were about to be reduced into pillars of ice.

"This is a five-hundred-year-old Glacier Spirit Grass, and it has exceptional effects for those who cultivating ice attribute cultivation techniques. If one were to forge it into a pill, one's cultivation would surely rise immensely. The minimum bid is 220 spirit stones, and every increment must be no lower than 20 spirit stones!"

"Glacier Spirit Grass? This is the main ingredient for the grade-4 Ice Soul Pill! Not only is it useful for those cultivating ice attribute cultivation technique, it is also extremely useful to Transcendent Mortal 3-dan Yin-Yang realm cultivators!"

"Indeed, this is truly a treasure! As expected of the auction conducted once a year by the Appraiser Hall. Even the first item is exceptional!"

"I'll be taking this Ice Spirit Grass, 240 spirit stones!"

"You think you can buy a five-hundred-year-old Spirit herb with just that bit of money? Dream on, 260 spirit stones!"

"Hah, it's mine! 300 spirit stones..."

Even though the first artifact was only a Spirit herb, it immediately heated up the atmosphere.

The Glacier Spirit Grass was an extremely valuable herb in itself, needless to say, one that had reached a maturity of five hundred years. In the end, the hammer price was 540 spirit stones!

"As expected of an auction conducted in the Appraiser Hall, it sure is lively..."

Upon seeing this sight, Zhang Xuan was impressed.

Based on his estimations, this Glacier Spirit Grass was only worth 300 spirit stones at maximum. Yet, it was hiked up to a whole 540 spirit stones. That was almost a single fold of his estimated price. Just like Hall Master Sai had said, it probably wouldn't be easy for

him to take down the Soulless Metal Humanoid.

After which, the second item was brought out. It was a unique mineral which raised the enhanced the durability and sharpness of a weapon greatly if a sliver of it was added during the crafting process.

As soon as the mineral appeared, the atmosphere immediately became even more elevated than when the Glacier Spirit Grass appeared.

What that accompanied cultivators through their days were weapons. The stronger their weapons, the greater their ability to protect themselves. As such, who would be willing to miss such a good item?

It didn't take long for the price to exceed 600 spirit stones, and eventually, a middle-aged man claimed it at a price of 720 spirit stones.

"The third object is a long sword known as [Cold Yin]. It was crafted by a 4-star pinnacle Blacksmith, Jiu Muzi. He gathered a total of 37 minerals, one of which is the extremely valuable Cold Yin Rock, before managing to forge the weapon. It contains an extremely strong yin attribute within, and if a cold attribute cultivator were to wield it, its might would be increased by several folds, allowing one to bring out fighting prowess far exceeding their limits!"

Elder Chen slowly drew the sword from its sheath, and an

incredibly cold gleam immediately escaped into the room, leaving shivers down the spine of whoever it shines upon.

"This is a Spirit intermediate-tier weapon, and it can cut through metal as easily as though mud. The minimum bid is 500 spirit stones, and every increment must be no lower than 50 spirit stones

"Cold Yin sword? I heard that it's an extremely powerful sword suited for females!"

"A Spirit intermediate-tier weapon is more than sufficient for the usage of a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan expert. Given that, 500 spirit stone isn't too expensive. I want it!"

"Don't even dream of competing with me, I'll be taking this sword down for my companion. 550 spirit stones..."

...

The cold gleam of the sword brought heat to everyone's gazes.

Zhang Xuan's eyes also lit up upon seeing it. Thus, he turned to Zhao Ya and asked, "That weapon is indeed not bad. Zhao Ya, do you want it?"

Zhao Ya possessed the Pure Yin Body, and this sword happened to complement her constitution. If she were to wield it, her battle prowess would surely leap greatly.

"Teacher, I think you should save the money to purchase the Soulless Metal Humanoid instead to save Lu Chong. I... don't need it!"

Zhao Ya shook her head, but her eyes were filled with desire.

Chapter 464: Let Me Give It a Try

Even though Zhao Ya found herself desiring this sword greatly, she knew that the reason why her teacher came to Honghai City was to obtain the Soulless Metal Humanoid. If he were to lack the funds to purchase it due to buying this sword for her, he would definitely regret it for life.

Knowing Zhao Ya's thoughts, Zhang Xuan said, "It's sufficient that you like it. If we end up having insufficient spirit stones, we can just find some other ways!"

It wasn't easy to come by an equipment that was compatible with one, and as such, Zhang Xuan didn't purchase many items for his students. Since he had managed to stumble by one for Zhao Ya, he was determined to buy it for her.

"Find some other ways? What other ways are there now?" Zhao Ya was taken aback.

For this five thousand spirit stones, her teacher had gone to the extent of nearly tearing down entire Appraiser Hall. Where else could he obtain even more spirit stones?

After all, he couldn't possibly tear down this auction hall.

"Simple!"

Chuckling softly, Zhang Xuan gestured to Sun Qiang and said,

"Get the one in charge of the auction over here!"

"Yes!"

Sun Qiang blinked his eyes in incomprehension.

Even so, since the young master had issued such an instruction, he must have his own purpose. Thus, he immediately left to get the person over.

Zhao Ya and the others stared at one another in confusion... Did their teacher really intend to tear down this auction hall?

Not too long later, Sun Qiang brought a middle-aged man back with him.

Logically speaking, given the middle-aged man's standing, he wouldn't allow himself to be summoned by just anyone so easily. However, this was Hall Master Sai's suite so he had no choice but to comply.

"Hall Master Sai!"

Upon walking into the room, the middle-aged man immediately turned his sight onto the elder.

"Manager Luo, you're here. Allow me to make the introductions, this is Zhang shi!"

Hall Master Sai chuckled. "Zhang shi, this is Manager Luo Qin. He's in charge of the matters regarding the auction, and if you've any problems, feel free to approach him!"

"Zhang shi?"

Only then did Luo Qin notice that a youngster was seated right beside Hall Master Sai, and on top of that, his disposition didn't pale in comparison to Hall Master Sai. Clearly, he was of esteemed standing as well.

"May I know the reason why Zhang shi is looking for me?"

Stepping forward, Luo Qin clasped his fists and smiled.

"Oh, I would like to add an additional item into the auction!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Add an additional item?"

Luo Qin was taken aback for a moment before a look of difficulty appeared on his face, "This... the auction has already started, and I'm afraid that it's too late to add anything in..."

To only bring up the matter now, you must be pulling my leg!

Besides, who knows whether the object you are adding in is

valuable or not. If it turns out to be fake, won't the reputation of the auction be destroyed?

"Don't be in such a hurry to deny it. Why don't you take a look first before making up your mind?"

Anticipating the other party's response, Zhang Xuan smiled nonchalantly. He waved his hands to interrupt the other party.

"Alright then!"

He didn't think that Zhang Xuan would offer anything that would interest him, but considering how the other party was a Hall Master Sai's guest, and Hall Master Sai even went to the extent of addressing him as 'shi', the other party's standing must be rather high. Thus, Luo Qin nodded his head.

Hall Master Sai also turned his gaze over. He was curious to see what this young man could take out.

Logically speaking, if he had any treasure, he would have brought it up already. He wouldn't have to go through the trouble with the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets.

Hu!

Before everyone's intrigued gazes, the young man took out an item. Upon seeing the appearance of the item clearly, Hall Master Sai's body shook and he nearly coughed blood.

What was in the young man's hand was a painting. It was the second artifact of the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets.

"It's this. Is it possible for you to put it into the auction as well?" Zhang Xuan asked.

The most valuable objects on him were naturally the treasures he received from the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets.

Given how those artifacts were able to the trial for the 5-star appraiser examination, they must be of great value. Purchasing one or two swords with the sum earned from these artifacts shouldn't be too difficult.

This was the reason why Zhang Xuan could remain calm even though he knew that the money he had on him was probably insufficient to take down the Soulless Metal Humanoid.

"Zhang shi, this artifact... is incomparably valuable. I think you should just keep it instead..."

Hall Master Sai chuckled awkwardly as his heart bled profusely.

That was a treasure belonging to their Appraiser Hall...

It is one thing that the artifact to acknowledge and follow a new owner, but for you to sell it off at the very next moment... What

the heck is this!

"If you think that it's a pity to see it sold... Hall Master Sai can buy it back! After all, we're friends. I won't demand too much; 5000 spirit stones will do..." Zhang Xuan chuckled.

"Cough cough..." Hall Master Sai's face turned red and he choked on his saliva. Eventually, he shook his head helplessly and said, "Alright, you should continue on with whatever you're intending to do..."

He couldn't even take out three thousand spirit stones at the moment, how in the world could he afford to buy this painting?

Even though he was unwilling to see the treasures of the Appraiser Hall being leaked out, there was nothing he could do.

"If you doubt the authenticity of this artifact, you can feel free to have Hall Master Sai appraise it!" Having received Hall Master Sai's approval, Zhang Xuan turned to Luo Qin and said.

"There's no need to appraise it, this painting is definitely real. I can tell so much..." Unrolling the painting and taking a glance at it, Luo Qin nodded his head.

As a manager of an auction hall, his appraising ability was above average as well. Otherwise, it would be embarrassing if he couldn't even identify a real treasure when it was placed before him.

The painting before him had a profound aura to it and concentrated spiritual energy was gathered around it. The birds in the painting felt as though they would soar out at any moment. Even a fool could tell that this was a valuable masterpiece.

"Alright, take it to the auction then! It'll be best if it can fetch 5000 spirit stones." Since the other party could recognize the value of the painting, Zhang Xuan could save the hassle of explaining. Thus, he dived straight into the matter.

"This..."

Upon hearing the other party's words, Luo Qin hesitated for a moment before saying, "Zhang shi, even though this painting is of extremely high grade, selling it for 5000 spirit stones... would be impossible!"

"Oh? Then how much can it fetch?" Perplexed, Zhang Xuan asked.

He wasn't too sure of the prices of artifacts, especially in terms of spirit stones. He thought that since this artifact was found in the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets, it should be an incredible treasure. Thus, its value should exceed at least five thousand... But yet, this fellow said that it was impossible.

What was going on?

"At the very most... It can only fetch 500 spirit stones!" Luo Qin's

face reddened.

"500?"

Zhang Xuan frowned in displeasure. "This painting came from the hands of a 5-star painter, and it also possesses a spirit. Not only can it absorb spiritual energy from the air to nourish itself, it also contains the essence of the world that is valuable to cultivators. Even Transcendent Mortal 4-dan experts would benefit greatly from looking at it for extended periods of time, so... how could it be worth only 500 spirit stones?"

After the verification from the Library of Heaven's Path, Zhang Xuan could tell that it was authentic, and it was a treasure left behind by a 5-star painter. The grade of the painting had reached the sixth level pinnacle, and it was just a step off from the legendary seventh level.

Yet, it was only worth 500? You must be kidding me!

"Indeed! Who do you think you are fooling? How can such a great painting be worth only that much money?" Sun Qiang and the others also found the matter hard to believe.

"Zhang shi, calm down. Listen to my explanation first!"

Luo Qin hurriedly bowed and explained awkwardly, "The painting is exquisite and majestic, and it clearly carries the disposition fitting of a great painter. However... it doesn't have a

name, and it isn't signed off either. This causes the value of the painting to drop tremendously. In truth, the art industry is somewhat similar to the antique industry. What that determines the value of an artwork isn't really the quality of the painting itself but the reputation of the artist. If this painting was created by a famous painter of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, it can easily fetch 5000 spirit stones... But under the current circumstances, even 500 is a positive estimate!"

Upon hearing the explanation, Zhang Xuan was taken aback. He immediately turned to Hall Master Sai, only to see the latter nodding his head.

"There's such a matter as well?" Zhang Xuan fell speechless.

Thinking about it, it did make sense.

After all, paintings weren't like weapons or medicinal treasures. The latter was truly beneficial to a person's cultivation whereas the former was more of a personal interest and hobby or an individual. If it wasn't the work of a famous painter, the collection value of the work would immediately plummet.

"This painting is the work of a 5-star Grandmaster Painter Wu Xuanzi from eight hundred years ago. Is he not considered as a famous painter?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"Wu Xuanzi? Of course he's considered as a famous painter. In fact, he's the very first 5-star beast tamer of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. If this is truly his work, it'll be worth more than 500

spirit stones. Just that... even though he possesses a great reputation, he didn't live in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance for too long, and he left behind very few works as well..." Luo Qin froze for a moment before asking, "How can you prove that this painting is his?"

Wu Xuanzi was an unparalleled figure in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance eight hundred years ago. Despite not having reached two hundred, he had already brought his art of beast taming and painting up to 5-star.

However, it was a pity that he left behind too few works in the world. Most appraisers couldn't discern his handwriting or his habits, and as such, it was difficult to determine whether this painting was a work of his or not.

"Ah..."

Zhang Xuan was stumped.

He only knew of the origin of the painting via the Library of Heaven's Path, but... how in the world was he supposed to prove this fact to others?

Wu Xuanzi didn't leave behind many works so it was hard to draw a comparison between his works. Otherwise, this painting wouldn't have remained unidentified for so long a period of time in the Appraiser Hall.

"Unless... a formidable painter bestows a name upon this painting. Even if the painter's reputation isn't as striking as Wu Xuanzi, as long as they're around the same level and the name he bestows bring out the true disposition of the painting, the title should be recognized by the spirit of the painting and the value of it will immediately increase by several folds... But even so, it'll probably only fetch around two thousand spirit stones at best!" Luo Qin said.

"Name? Brings out the true disposition of the painting?"

"Un. Bestowing a name to a completed painting isn't a simple matter. Everyone has different thoughts, and there could many multiple interpretations to a single painting. If one's line of thoughts differs from the original painter by even the slightest, one would be unable to earn the acknowledgement of the spirit of the painting! If so, not only would the value of the painting not increase, it'll even cause a fall in the artistic conception of the original painting, thus resulting in a massive plummet in its value!"

Luo Qin explained. "Thus, the only way is to first understand the background of the painter to attempt to get into his line of thoughts. Only then can one come up with a name that could bring out the true disposition of the painting and boost its value. Otherwise..."

Even though Luo Qin didn't finish his words, the meaning he wished to convey was clear.

Ten thousand people viewing a single painting would generate

ten thousand different thoughts.

To fathom the thoughts of another, how difficult a task it was! In fact, it wouldn't be wrong to say that it was nearly impossible!

"You're saying that... if one could emulate the original author's understanding of the painting and bestow a fitting name to the painting, there's a chance that it could bring out its true disposition?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"That's right... If one understands the thoughts of the original painter, meaning Wu Xuanzi's thoughts, and write them down on the painting, it'll definitely allow the value of the painting to soar. However, putting aside how it's impossible to verify whether it's a painting left behind by Wu Xuanzi or not, even if it is his work, he is well-known for keeping a low profile. As such, his background, the condition, and state he is in when he paints are completely unknown to others... And to make things worse, this painting is extremely bizarre as well. It's difficult to even identify the species of the birds in the painting... To fathom the painter's thoughts on top of that, it is impossible!"

Luo Qin shook his head.

Even though he had only taken a look, based on his many years of experience, he could tell that it was impossible to fathom Wu Xuanzi's thoughts.

"Impossible?"

After hearing Luo Qin's explanation, Zhang Xuan was taken aback. Then, a smile slowly crept onto his face.

"Since bestowing a name will boost the value of this painting...

"Let me give it a try!"

Chapter 465: Rousing from the Drunken Dreams

"You?"

Everyone was taken aback.

Hall Master Sai's eyes even rolled around.

Based on what Sun Qiang said, the other party was a painter. But... even if the other party was a painter as well, to fathom the true meaning behind a painting made eight hundred years ago... That was an impossible task!

Furthermore, the birds in the painting were neither spirit beasts or savage beasts; since it couldn't be identified at all, how could one bestow it with a name?

Putting aside how the painting wouldn't fetch a high price, more importantly, it was a crime to ruin such a valuable art piece!

"This..."

Luo Qin scratched his head in embarrassment, not knowing what to do.

The main reason why he explained the entire matter so carefully was so as to dispel the other party's thoughts. Who knew that his

words would only egg the other party on...

Are you that frenzied for money?!

If it was that easy to come up with a title that would bring out the true disposition of the painting, there would have been at least a single success case in the past few years.

Hu!

Disregarding the crowd's response, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and took out a brush. Then, he placed the painting on a table in the room.

It might be difficult for others to fathom the thoughts of the painter and find a suitable name for this painting, but he was different!

The Library of Heaven's Path could provide him with the ideal name immediately!

If he were to write the name, he would surely be able to bring out the true disposition of the painting, thus inducing a leap in the value of the painting.

"It can't be that... you're serious about doing it!"

Seeing Zhang Xuan dab his brush in ink, Hall Master Sai hurried

forward to persuade him otherwise.

"You should reconsider your actions, that's... a supreme treasure left behind by our predecessors..."

This treasure had been passed down within the Appraiser Hall from generation to generation. To have it destroyed right before him... He couldn't allow himself to simply look on by the side.

"Since it can raise the value of the painting, why shouldn't I do it?" Zhang Xuan chuckled.

"But what if you fail..." Hall Master Sai was agitated. He was just about to continue speaking when Sun Qiang walked up to him with a heated gaze.

"Hall Master Sai, judging from your experience, it seems like you think that our young master will fail. If so... why don't we wager on it then? There's no need to make it too big, three thousand spirit stones will do!"

"..." Hall Master Sai's body swayed.

What the heck was this!

Can't at least one of you two be normal?

One insisted on bestowing a name on the painting while the

other one was challenging him to a wager so confidently... What's wrong with you two!

Hall Master Sai's complexion was extremely awful. He was tempted to accept the wager but upon recalling the tragic fate that befell Elder Chen, he backed down.

This fellow was an incredible figure who could win even the acknowledgement of the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets... Perhaps, he might really find the words to bring out the true disposition of the painting.

"Regarding the wager... I'll pass!"

With a pale face, Hall Master Sai backed down.

"Ah?" Taking this scene into sight, Luo Qin widened his eyes in shock.

Hall Master Sai clearly didn't believe that Zhang shi could come up with a correct name, and he was determined to stop him. Yet, with a word from a servant, he immediately backed down from fear...

What was going on?

When did the hall master become so easy to talk to?

Just as Luo Qin was perplexed over the situation, he suddenly felt a violent disturbance in the spiritual energy in the air. It seemed to be to be gathering at an area not too far away from him, and vaguely, he could hear the chirping of the birds.

Qiu qiu qiu!

The sound was crisp, and even though it wasn't too loud, everyone within the auction hall could hear it clearly.

"Ah..."

Following the direction from where the sound came from, he realized that in his short moment of hesitation, that Zhang shi had already finished writing a name on the painting. Upon 'seeing' it, the birds chirped and flew excitedly, as though delighted to be given a name.

"This is... Elation of Unearthed Disposition, Enlightened Spirit? The heck... What the heck is going on?"

Luo Qin's mouth twitched in agitation, and his body trembled violently.

"Enlightened Spirit... That is a work of the seventh level, a masterpiece that only a 6-star painter can produce..." Hall Master Sai's vision went dark.

He had just thought that the other party would fail when the

other party came up with a name that not only brought out the true disposition of the painting, he even induced the phenomenon 'Elation of Unearthed Disposition, Enlightened Spirit. This... Was this really happening before him?

The first six levels of painting were as followed: Reality Depiction, Spiritual Canvas, Infused Intentions, Breathtaking Verisimilitude, Spirit Creation, and Spirit Wisdom!

Normal 3-star painters could only produce a painting at the level of Spirit Creation, and a Spirit Wisdom painting could only be created by the hands of a 4-star and 5-star painter.

Going beyond the sixth level, Spirit Wisdom, the seventh level was a realm that only 6-star painters could hope to reach... Enlightened Spirit.

At this level, all of the living objects within the painting would come to life, and they would possess their own intelligence and they could acknowledge their own master. In fact, they could even soar out of the painting and they wouldn't disappear even after a day or two...

In other words, a painter who had reached this level of enlightenment could easily draw out birds and soar to the skies.

It was said that a formidable 6-star painter had once drawn a crane on a wall, and it materialized from the wall. Then, riding on the crane, he soared into the distance, leaving behind the legend of Soaring on the Heavenly Crane.

Initially, this drawing should have only been at sixth level pinnacle, and it was still a far way off from reaching the next realm. Even if the name one came up with was able to bring out its true disposition, it should only have added slightly to the harmony of the painting...

Yet, Zhang Xuan's name allowed it to immediately surpass its limits and reach the seventh level instantaneously...

The heck!

Am I insane, or is this fellow mad?

Are you a monster? How in the world... did you manage to do it?

Hall Master Sai's body froze and his eyes were filled with frenzied. At the same time, relief gushed through his body. He felt that it was a blessing that he didn't wager with Sun Qiang. Otherwise, he would probably end up in the same state as Elder Chen...

Actually, the frenzy wasn't just limited to the group in the suite. The entire auction hall also broke out in commotion. The ongoing auction for the [Cold Yin Sword] also abruptly came to a halt.

The dancing birds weren't just limited to within the suite; they flew through the windows and danced around the auction hall. The bright red flying birds resembled mini suns in the evening,

illuminating the entire place with its brilliance.

"What... are those?"

"These birds are illusory beings. Someone has created a painting of the seventh level..."

"A seventh level painting? A 6-star painter? Th-this..."

"Which senior is it? Is this painting for sale? If it is, I'll be willing to put all of my fortune into it..."

"So do I!"

...

The dancing birds formed a spectacular sight within the auction hall. Everyone's eyes reddened in excitement.

Even the most formidable painter in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance was only at 4-star pinnacle.

The legendary Wu Xuanzi from eight hundred years ago had reached 5-star, but it was a pity that... he didn't leave behind any works.

Yet, a work that could only come from a 6-star painter had

suddenly appeared in the room. How could the crowd not go into a frenzy?

"This... It can't be the doing of that Zhang shi, could it?"

The host, Elder Chen, upon seeing that no one's attention was on him, immediately turned to look at the suite where the birds appeared from and he immediately frowned.

That was the hall master's suite... He couldn't think of anyone else other than that unfathomable young man who could cause such a huge commotion.

...

While the crowd outside had fallen into a frenzy, Zhang Xuan, who had just completed the painting, kept his brush and smiled at the dumbfounded Luo Qin, "May I know if this painting is worth 5000 spirit stones like that?"

"Five thousand? Worth, it's definitely worth that amount..."

Recovering from his shock, Luo Qin hurriedly nodded his head.

Just a named sixth level pinnacle painting was already worth 5000 spirit stones. A painting of the seventh level... Even if it was sold for 10,000 spirit stones, there would probably be someone who would be willing to fork out the sum!

Just by casually writing a few works, this young man had raised the value of the painting by twenty times. This... It would be a gross underestimation to say that his words were worth gold!

Fearsome!

Curious to know what it was that the young man wrote that transformed a sixth level pinnacle painting into a seventh level one, they hurriedly turned their gazes to the painting. However, upon taking a look, their bodies swayed and they nearly fell to the floor.

It was just five squiggly words — [Rousing from the Drunken Dreams]!

These five words weren't written in any conventional form of calligraphy; rather, it felt as though it was written right after one woke up from a drunken stupor. Even though it was squiggly, there was exquisite in a very different manner. Not only weren't they out of place, it seemed to complement with the bizarre birds on the painting, harmonizing the painting into one entirety.

"Rousing from the Drunken Dreams? This is the name of the painting?"

Luo Qin grabbed his hair frenziedly.

If it was anyone else, they would surely be racking their brains to

think of the origin of the bizarre birds, given that they were the main theme to the painting.

Yet, this fellow simply went on to write Rousing From the Drunken Dreams... And what was even more frightening was that... he was right!

Could it be that... the legendary Wu Xuanzi drew this painting right after he woke up from a dream after drinking the previous day?

If that was the case, wasn't this way too difficult to guess!

Furthermore... how in the world did this fellow know about it then?

"Indeed, this painting is indeed made by Wu Xuanzi right after he woke up from his drunken stupor!" Zhang Xuan confirmed everyone's doubts.

Unable to accept this outcome, Hall Master Sai asked, "But... but... what spirit beasts are those birds? Why haven't I heard of them before?"

He had stumbled by this painting back then when he was challenging the Harmonious Stream of the Flowing Goblets, and for this, he had flipped through innumerable books, but he was unable to find an answer.

Since this was Wu Xuanzi's work, these birds should at least have a name.

"Oh... They're called White Purity Birds!" Zhang Xuan said.

"White Purity Birds? That can't be! White Purity Birds have long wings, purple beaks, golden claws, red head, and they're slightly plump as well. Not only does these birds not possess those unique traits, they clearly possess a slim physique..."

This time, the one who spoke was Zhao Feiwu. She felt that there was a clear problem in Zhang Xuan's analysis.

The White Purity Bird was a commonly seen spirit beast, and its unique characteristics made it extremely easy to identify. On the other hand, these bizarre birds didn't possess a sliver of those characteristics, so how could they be White Purity Birds?

If those were really White Purity Birds, Hall Master Sai and the others would have long identified the painting.

"Oh, when Wu Xuanzi drew this painting, he was still slightly intoxicated so he depicted the White Purity Birds inaccurately, resulting in their current forms..." Zhang Xuan explained.

"Inaccurate depiction?"

At that moment, everyone trembled in shock.

Who could have thought that a 5-star painter would make such a fundamental error!

"Indeed. When he woke up from his stupor, he realized how ridiculous his drawing was, and he thought that if it were to get out, it would surely affect his reputation. However, he found it a waste to tear it apart as well. Thus... he removed his name and signature, thus resulting in this incomplete work!" Zhang Xuan said.

It was recorded amidst the flaws in the Library of Heaven's Path. Initially, when Zhang Xuan first saw it, he felt that it was ridiculous as well.

But this was the truth.

If it wasn't so ridiculous, Wu Xuanzi would have surely left behind his name, and the painting would have never reached the Appraiser Hall.

"Th-this... is the result of your appraisal?"

Hall Master Sai's teeth clattered together, as though fearful of the terrifying monster before him.

Chapter 466: Our Young Master Is Buying It!

As a 4-star pinnacle appraiser, he had a deep understanding of the occupation. It was already formidable if one could determine who the painter was based on the brush stroke. To determine that the painting was drawn when the painter was drunk, and that he had removed the title and his own signature from it... Was this truly humanly possible?

Hall Master Sai wasn't the only one harboring such thoughts. Zhao Feiwu, Luo Qin, and the others were also dumbfounded by the sight before them. They stared fixedly at Zhang Xuan, determined to find out how he managed to deduce this much.

"Hehe!"

Meeting their gazes, Zhang Xuan chuckled softly. "Appraising isn't just about identifying a treasure and its origin. More importantly, one should guess the thoughts going through the mind of the creator, and only then can one gain a deeper understanding of an artifact!"

"This painting may seem well-organized, but in truth, it's extremely inconsistent. One of the basics of painting is balance, but this painting is high on the left and low on the right, giving a feeling that it is tilted toward one side. Clearly, the person drawing isn't steady on his feet. It is very likely that he was lying on the paper. Also, look at this area, that area, and that area. It's clear those portions can only be drawn when one is lying down..."

"Also, the bizarre birds have short wings, white beaks, black claws, black heads, and a slim body. It doesn't resemble White Purity Birds at all, and it is impossible to tell what species it is with a single glance!

"However, if one were to take a closer look, there are reeds and blooming purple flowers all over the painting. Those two are the favorites of White Purity Birds. And most importantly, every single of those birds has a stalk of grass in its beak!"

Zhang Xuan pointed.

And just as what Zhang Xuan had said, every single bird in the painting had a stalk of grass in their mouth.

"This grass bears a striking resemblance with Riverleaf Grass. The Riverleaf Grass contains lethal poison, and there isn't a single spirit beast that enjoys eating it. As such, it causes some confusion. However, what if these were White Jade Stem instead?

"The stems of the White Jade Grass resemble the Riverleaf Grass a lot, and there are even medicine suppliers intentionally mixing the two together to earn a larger profit margin... While the White Purity Bird wouldn't even touch the Riverleaf Grass, the White Jade Stem is its favorite food..."

"This..."

Hall Master Sai and Luo Qin's bodies froze.

The other party's words were logical and rational. By following his analysis, one can easily conclude that the birds were White Purity Birds.

"Now that we've confirmed the species of the bird, the rest is simple. If one pays careful attention, one can see that the painting is completed in a single breath. Unlike usual paintings, an outline wasn't drawn beforehand. As a talented painter who is capable of producing a work of the sixth level, how could he possibly neglect such fundamentals? More importantly... there are even traces of corrections being made to the birds! Following the previous line of thought, it can be deduced that this painting was done when the other party was in a drunken state!

"After deducing this much, it isn't that difficult to fathom its origin..."

Zhang Xuan's lips curled up.

He wasn't just spouting nonsense. As a painter with capability of 3-star and above, given that he knew the result in advance and the flaws listed in the Library of Heaven's Path, it wasn't too difficult for him to notice the various peculiarities with the painting.

Otherwise, it would be nigh impossible for one to link all of these peculiarities together.

"Th-this..."

Seeing how Zhang Xuan explained the entire matter calmly, everyone in the room was frenzied.

At this very moment, Hall Master Sai realized that the other party's appraising ability wasn't just slightly higher than his; the two of them weren't even on the same level.

"I must report it to the headquarter immediately. With his eye of discernment and capability, he should be qualified as a 5-star appraiser at the very least... or perhaps even higher!"

Swallowing a mouthful of saliva, Hall Master Sai made up his mind.

This fellow's capability had already surpassed the level within the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. He was in no way inferior even when compared to a 5-star appraiser.

Given how talented the other party was, he had to report the matter up swiftly so that he wouldn't be buried amidst dust.

"Alright, let's not delay the auction. Take it over!"

After he was done with his explanation, Zhang Xuan took a glance outside and saw that the entire auction hall had been alarmed by the commotion he caused. Thus, he shook his hands casually and sat back down.

"Yes!" Finally recovering from his shock, Luo Qin carefully rolled the painting, kept it, and backed out of the suite.

Not too long later, Elder Chen shocked voice sounded, "I believe everyone here witnessed the spectacle just a moment ago. A painting of the seventh level has been created, and all of us here were privileged to watch this phenomenal sight!

"The painting itself came from a grandmaster painter from eight hundred years ago, Wu Xuanzi, and another rising painter has bestowed it with a name and triggered a Spirit Euphoria, allowing it to make the breakthrough from the sixth level pinnacle!

"This is the very first seventh level painting created in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. It's a result of the perfect harmony between the older and current generations. I can't say for sure whether there'll be any more of such miracles in the future or not, but without a doubt, this is unprecedented in history!"

The more Elder Chen spoke, the more agitated he became. "And now, the owner of the painting wishes to auction it off. The starting bid will be 8000 spirit stones, and each increment must be no less than 1000. Let the bidding begin!"

"That painting is really up for sale? Great! I want it..."

"8000 spirit stones is the starting bid? It's a little expensive, but it'll be worth the price. Hurry up and inform the clan of the matter. Even if we have to mortgage our old residence, we've got to

obtain it!"

"No matter the price..."

...

Hearing that the painting was up for sale, everyone below fell into a frenzy.

A painting of the seventh level had never appeared in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance before. If one could obtain a painting of such level, it would be worth it even if one had to go into bankruptcy.

Putting everything aside, it was highly likely that the price could increase by several folds when selling it in the future.

"I offer 9000!"

"10,000!"

"11,000!"

...

The price rose swiftly.

"This..." Seeing the frenzy below, Zhang Xuan blinked his eyes in

shock.

Given how Hall Master Sai could only produce three thousand spirit stones, he thought that 5000 would be the limit already. Never in his dreams did he expect to see the price soar to beyond 10,000.

"Just like Elder Chen and the others, I spent most of my money on the collection of treasures. As such, I don't have many spirit stones on me. Besides, I'm only an individual while they represent an entire power or a prestigious clan..."

Noticing Zhang Xuan's doubt, Hall Master Sai smiled bitterly.

Logically speaking, given how lucrative appraising was as an occupation, these 4-star appraisers should possess immense wealth. At the very least, they should be able to match up to those bidders below.

But unfortunately, they spent all of their wealth collecting treasures. As such, their liquid assets were severely limited. Three thousand was already the limit of their wealth.

Furthermore, the clan that those bidders below could have thousands of years of history behind them. The wealth that a clan could accumulate over such a long period of time was astonishing. While Hall Master Sai and the others would find it hard to take out 10,000 spirit stones, to those below, it only meant a short moment of financial difficulty. As long as they managed to find a buyer for it, not only would they recoup their losses, they would even earn a

huge profit.

...

Within a suite in the auction hall.

A young man was currently seated right in front of the window. He carried a majestic and lofty aura reminiscent of a noble dragon.

Standing behind him was an elder. Even though he was completely motionless, his very presence felt like an endless abyss, leaving one unable to determine the depth of his strength. It was likely that his cultivation was superior even when compared to Jin Conghai.

"A seventh level painting? Interesting!"

Looking at the [Rousing from a Drunken Dream] that Elder Chen took out, the eyes of the young man gleamed.

The elder bowed.

"Young master, are you interested in it?"

The young man nodded.

"A seventh level painting is a valuable treasure even to the elders

of the sect. If I manage to buy it, it'll surely be extremely useful to my supporting occupation as a painter."

"Alright, I'll buy it then!"

Nodding his head, the elder prepared to offer a price.

"There's no rush to it. We can make our offer after the commotion below dies down." The young man waved his hands casually.

"Yes!" The elder hesitated for a moment before continuing, "Just that... I'm afraid that if the price reaches way too high, we might not have sufficient spirit stones to take down the Soulless Metal Humanoid..."

"The Soulless Metal Humanoid is linked to the soul oracles. As long as we take some useful information back to the sect, my standing will surely surge greatly... Once I earn the recognition of the Master Teacher Pavilion, it'll just be a matter of time before I become the number one expert of the younger generation."

The young man chuckled, "But... there's no need to worry about it. I've already looked into the matter regarding the Soulless Metal Humanoid, and the fellow auctioning the item doesn't seem to intend to sell it for spirit stones."

"He isn't selling it for spirit stones?"

The elder was taken aback.

If a person took an artifact out for it to be auctioned, shouldn't the purpose be profit? To refuse spirit stones as payment, what did that mean?

"I heard that fellow's longevity is reaching its limit. As long as his bottleneck continues to confine him, it'll be futile no matter how much spirit stones he has in his possession. Seems like you got it. Indeed, what he wants is a Tutelage Jade Token; the higher grade it is, the better it is," the young man said.

Even though spirit stones were valuable, there was a limit to what they could do.

If one's cultivation was stuck at a bottleneck, one's longevity would remain at a standstill. If so, it would just be a matter of time before one was reduced to dust... Once one died, what use would money be?

One might as well trade it for Tutelage Jade Tokens. In the off chance that one managed to achieve a breakthrough, one could even extend one's longevity. In any case, it was way better than hoarding spirit stones.

Besides, with a higher cultivation, it was much easier to earn money.

No matter where one went, strength was still the most important

factor one needed to possess. Everything else was just secondary.

"If he only needed Tutelage Jade Token, then this matter is indeed easy to settle... Young master is a talented master teacher yourself. To guide a cultivator from this kind of small place and help him achieve a breakthrough shouldn't be too difficult!"

Upon coming to a realization, the elder smiled.

"Of course. After all, I'm aiming for the top five places in the Master Teacher Tournament this time around!"

The young man declared confidently.

"Young master possesses unparalleled talent. Regardless of whether it's your Soul Depth or your understanding toward martial arts, you are far superior to the others. I think that even the first three places won't be too difficult for you!" the elder said.

"First three... It'll be hard to say. Those few aren't easy to deal with. However, I'm not afraid of them. Let's see who will get the upper hand then!"

The young man's expression turned grim for a moment before he shook it off and turned his attention back to the auction hall. "Alright, it's about time. Make an offer! Right, I still have some uses for spirit stones so don't waste them."

"Yes!"

The elder nodded.

At that moment, the price had already come to a standstill. Before such a price, the affluent clans and powers had no choice but to back off.

"20,000 calling once. 20,000 calling twice. Is there anyone who can offer a price higher than this? If not, this Rousing from the Drunken Dreams will be going to this friend from the Suite 14..."

Elder Chen scanned the surroundings.

...

"20,000 spirit stones? To think that a painting could fetch such a price..." Zhang Xuan's eyes glowed when he heard the final price below.

"Indeed, it seems like no one else can compete with that anymore. 20,000 spirit stones... This is truly a huge sum!" Sun Qiang nodded excitedly.

Before the duo could finish their words, the voice of an elder sounded.

"Wait a moment, I offer 21 4-star Tutelage Jade Tokens. Our young master will be taking that painting!"

Chapter 467: Bidding For The Soulless Metal Humanoid (1)

"21... 4-star Tutelage Jade Token? In terms of spirit stones, that will be 21,000 spirit stones! What a generous offer!"

"Incredible! Tutelage Jade Tokens are incomparably valuable, especially those belonging to 4-star master teachers. Even though the price is publicly known to be 1000 spirit stones per token, the price in the black market has already reached up to 1200. 21 of those would mean a hulking sum of around 25,000!"

"Seems like no one will be able to top that price..."

...

Upon hearing the offer, the auction hall flew into an uproar.

In truth, the most common currency on the continent wasn't spirit stones but Tutelage Jade Tokens.

A 4-star Tutelage Jade Token could be traded for a hundred 3-star Tutelage Jade Token; a 3-star Tutelage Jade Token could be traded for a hundred 2-star Tutelage Jade Token... So on and so forth. And with ten spirit stones, one could buy one 3-star Tutelage Jade Token.

Thus, going by the proportions, a 4-star Tutelage Jade Token was

worth 1000 spirit stones, and on top of that... they weren't readily available.

One must know that of the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance, there were only ten or so 4-star master teachers. On the other hand, there were billions of cultivators... Considering the proportion of the two, one could imagine how lacking the resource was.

Usually, if a cultivator were to obtain a 4-star Tutelage Jade Token, they would use it for themselves. Thus, it was hard to find one even in the black markets. Yet, that person in the suite actually offered 21 of those tokens just to buy a single painting. This incomparably generous act made everyone felt frenzied.

"Incredible!"

Hall Master Sai's eyebrows twitched as well.

Even those of his cultivation would benefit greatly from the guidance of a 4-star master teacher.

The value of 21 4-star Tutelage Jade Token clearly exceeded that of 20,000 spirit stones by way too much.

Just as Hall Master Sai was about to turn to the young man to congratulate him on his massive profit he had just earned, the other party's complexion darkened and he cursed out loud.

"The heck!"

At this moment, Zhang Xuan was undergoing a breakdown within.

The reason why he took this painting out was so that he could earn more spirit stones to buy the Soulless Metal Humanoid, as well as to fuel his future cultivation.

He was just delighted by the windfall of 20,000 spirit stones when that fellow wrecked his dreams.

21 4-star Tutelage Jade Tokens...

Why in the world would I want your Tutelage Jade Tokens?

Even the lesson of a 6-star master teacher would be useless to me!

No matter how formidable a master teacher was, even if it were Empyrean Kong shi himself, they couldn't guarantee that the contents of his lesson would be entirely correct. However, the Library of Heaven's Path could!

As long as something written had no errors or flaws, it must be correct.

As long as he had this with him, there was no master teacher, no matter how formidable he was, who was qualified to become his

teacher?

That fellow actually hoped to purchase his painting using this toy? Zhang Xuan felt so stifled that he was about to explode.

What that left him even more speechless were the countless gazes of envy from the surroundings... Envious your head!

Zhang Xuan was on the verge of crying.

"Zhang shi, those are 4-star Tutelage Grade Tokens! Countless people dream of it, you..."

Seeing Zhang Xuan's reaction, Hall Master Sai was perplexed.

Everyone wanted to get their hands on some Tutelage Jade Tokens; even low ranked master teachers hoped to receive the guidance of higher ranked master teachers. Yet, this Zhang shi... Why did he seem so unhappy?

Wasn't it something to be overjoyed about?

Suppressing his dismal, Zhang Xuan said, "Hall Master Sai, I'll have to trouble you to send a message to Elder Chen to say that... I don't need the Tutelage Jade Token. I only want spirit stones!"

"You only want spirit stones?"

Hall Master Sai was taken aback.

Indeed, the actions of a genius couldn't be understood by mortals such as him...

"Un!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

"Alright then!"

Seeing the other party insist on it, Hall Master Sai could only agree to the matter.

...

"21 4-star Tutelage Jade Token, let's see who else can compete with me!"

Seeing the uproar in the hall right after his bid was announced, the young man's mouths crept upward.

Master teacher was a lucrative occupation, and this Tutelage Jade Token was the main reason behind it.

But of course, this token couldn't be given out as one pleased. There was a limit to how much Tutelage Jade Token a master teacher of a certain rank could distribute each year, and this was regulated by the Master Teacher Pavilion. If one's quota exceeded the limit in the first year, he would have to cut down on the next

year.

After all, master teachers couldn't possibly spend all of their time conducting lessons. They had to cultivate too, and there were many other things they had to attend to as well.

To give out 21 Tutelage Jade Token at a single go, that was nearly half a year of lessons for him!

"21 4-star Tutelage Jade Token, is there anyone who can offer a higher bid? If not, this painting will be going to the friend in Suite 23..."

Elder Chen was clearly stunned by this sudden generous offer as well. However, after a moment of daze, he hurriedly recovered and continued on. However, just as he was about to declare the results, he suddenly heard something and his body froze.

Then, with a bizarre face, he shouted, "Is there anyone who is offering a price above that of 20,000 spirit stones? If not, this painting will be going to the friend in Suite 14!"

"What?"

The young man was just swelling in pride at having bought the painting when he heard those words, froze, and nearly keeled over.

What was going on?

"Our young master has just offered 21 4-star Tutelage Jade Token. Does that price not exceed 20,000 spirit stones?" The elder couldn't help but ask. "If that's insufficient, we can still raise the stakes!"

"Oh, that friend over there, I apologize but the seller has just told me that he's only accepting spirit stones!" Elder Chen replied.

"Only accepting spirit stones?"

The young man felt his head spin.

There was actually such a foolish person in the world?

With so many Tutelage Jade Tokens, not only could one from a 4-star master teacher, one could befriend him as well. Yet, this fellow actually turned it down... and went for the cheaper spirit stones instead?

"That's right. Are there any higher bids? If not, this painting will be going to the friend in Suite 14!" Elder Chen continued.

The person in Suite 14 was a renowned painter. He thought that he would surely lose the bid given how the other competitor had offered so many Tutelage Jade Token. He didn't expect to make such a sudden comeback; he was overjoyed.

"Sold!"

After confirming that there would be no one offering a higher price, the painting was eventually dealt at with a price of 20,000 spirit stones.

"Damn it, damn it!"

The young man's face steeled, and he was on the verge of going on a rampage.

4-star Tutelage Jade Tokens were goods that were highly desired but in short supply no matter where one went; yet, over here, he failed to trade them for the item he wanted. This made him infuriated.

"Go and check the identity and the background of the one who sold the painting!"

The young man instructed.

"Yes!" The elder walked out, and not too long later, he returned.

"Reporting to the young master, the painting is sold by the people within Suite 1. If I'm not mistaken, the seller seems to be a friend of the head of the Appraiser Hall, Hall Master Sai. As for his identity, I wasn't able to get any information on that at the moment!"

"Suite 1?"

Narrowing his eyes, the young man harrumphed.

"Young master, now that the painting is bought away by someone else, what should we do?" the elder asked.

"Let's put that aside for the moment and focus on obtaining the Soulless Metal Humanoid first!"

The young man was frustrated, but knowing that there was no helping it, he shook his hands.

Once the hammer was struck, no matter how prestigious his standing was, he couldn't reverse the decision.

If the seller insisted on dealing in spirit stones, then no matter how formidable he was, there was nothing he could do about it.

"Alright then!"

The elder also shook his head helplessly.

...

The auction continued on. After selling away the painting which

had caused such a huge commotion, the Cold Yin Sword was put on sale again, and eventually, Zhang Xuan took it for a price of 700 spirit stones.

The artifacts that came afterward didn't cause as much of a storm as Zhang Xuan's painting.

Even though they were valuable, they were incomparable to a seventh level painting.

On top of the Cold Yin Sword, Zhang Xuan bought another two artifacts—a spear for Zheng Yang and a body plate for Yuan Tao.

The total price of the two objects was around a thousand spirit stones so it was still within an acceptable price range.

As for Liu Yang and Wang Ying, as there was nothing suitable in the auction, Zhang Xuan wasn't able to buy anything for them.

"Now, the final object of the auction, as well as the one everyone has been anticipating for, the Soulless Metal Humanoid!"

As Elder Chen spoke, a stone pedestal slowly rose, and a figure seemingly crafted of gold donning a full body armor appeared before the crowd.

Zhang Xuan turned his gaze over as well.

It was indeed no different from a human; the only difference was that a huge quantity of metal had been added into the body, enhancing its defense.

Activating the Eye of Insight, Zhang Xuan soon shook his head in disappointment.

Clearly, this object was beyond his current analytical ability. He wasn't able to discern anything about it at all.

"This Soulless Metal Humanoid has undergone a collaborative appraisal by Hall Master Sai, Elder Lu, and myself, and we've confirmed that there's no mistake about it. This is the guard of the ancient soul oracles and it possesses unimaginable value."

Elder Chen introduced. "However, I'm afraid that I am not in charge of this one. The owner of the Soulless Metal Humanoid has decided to sell it for himself. He intends to trade it for a treasure he needs... Let's invite the auctioneer up on stage then!"

Following which, an old man walked in from the back of the round stage.

This old man had a white beard, his skin was slightly loose, and he carried a slightly archaic aura with him. With just a glance, it was clear that he was advanced in age.

"Hmm?"

Activating the Eye of Insight, Zhang Xuan took a glance at the old man and he immediately frowned.

Even though the old man's cultivation seemed to have reached Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle already, for some reason, Zhang Xuan was still able to discern some things about him via the Eye of Insight.

Under normal circumstances, the Eye of Insight should only work on those of a small cultivation realm above him. Given that Zhang Xuan was current at Half-Transcension realm, he should only be able to peer into the flaws of a Transcendent Mortal 1-dan primary stage cultivator.

But for some reason... He was able to see some problems from the other party. This was extremely peculiar.

"That is the person who discovered the Soulless Metal Humanoid?"

"It seems so. Who knows what kind of luck he has to stumble by it. Once he sells it, his wealth will surely increase by leaps and bounds!"

"Indeed, why do I not possess such luck..."

...

Upon realizing that it was a decrepit old man who'd found the

Soulless Metal Humanoid, a commotion broke out amidst the crowd.

"Everyone, please calm down. Since everyone is interested in buying this object, let's listen to what he intends to exchange it for. Regardless of whether it is on your own or with your clan, as long as you can produce the item he needs within a single day, you can feel free to make an offer!" Elder Chen said.

"Alright!"

Upon hearing that the conditions for participating was so lax, everyone was overjoyed.

Initially, just like Hall Master Sai, they thought that the other party would be trading it for spirit stones. Thus, they brought a huge fortune out with them. Yet, the owner was actually intending to trade it for another object. This had caught them off guard.

However, upon hearing that they would be given time to prepare whatever that was needed, they regained their spirit.

Who of those who could participate in this auction didn't belong to an influential power?

As long as the other party could name out the treasure, they were confident that even if they couldn't find it, they could at least find some news on it.

Stepping forward, the old man said, "It is very simple. Everyone here can feel free to offer anything that you can produce within a single day, and if it satisfies me, I'll make the trade immediately!"

Chapter 468: Bidding For The Soulless Metal Humanoid (2)

"Feel free to offer?"

"As long as he's satisfied, he'll make the exchange? What kind of condition is this?"

"Could it be that this fellow is lustful, and we have to prepare some ladies for him?"

"Indeed, this condition is way too bizarre. After all, you can't possibly expect us to fathom his thoughts to give him something he desires!"

...

Upon hearing the bizarre condition of the auction, everyone was dumbfounded.

In an auction, one would usually demand spirit stones, Tutelage Jade Tokens, or valuable objects. Never had they heard of an auction which the condition was 'as long as I'm satisfied'.

What if that person was unable to find something that satisfies him? Would he refuse to sell it then?

What the heck was this?

"Interesting!"

In Suite 23, the young man had finally recovered from his shock. The anxiety from his eyes disappeared, and a slight smile crept onto his face.

"Interesting?" The elder was puzzled.

"The reason why he made this condition is so as to hook a big one!" the young man said.

"Young master, you noticed something about the auction?"

"Simple. As we're dealing with artifacts here, the value might be subjective as people have different needs. As such, interested buyers can only raise their bids to their upper limit in hopes that the artifact they offer will satisfy him."

The young man chuckled, "This way, the price will soar. All kinds of treasures will be offered, and all he needs to do is to choose the one that is the most valuable and useful to him."

"This..." The elder was stunned.

That was indeed the case.

There were some treasures hoarded by some of the influential

powers that one couldn't obtain by normal means. If they were unwilling to take it out, those items would never see the light of the day.

However, for this Soulless Metal Humanoid, there was a good chance that they might take those treasures out. If so, this method of conducting the auction would bring the owner even greater value.

"Let's forget about that for now, let's see what those people have to offer!"

Knowing the other party's motive, the young man chuckled silently.

...

"Something that would satisfy him?"

Hearing the condition, Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

"What arrogant words! Even though the Soulless Metal Humanoid is valuable, it's just an ancient relic now. Who knows whether it still can be used or not? The only reason why most people are interested in it is because it came from the ancient soul oracles!"

Zhao Feiwu harrumphed.

In truth, the Soulless Metal Humanoid was no different from a slightly more advanced puppet, wielding the strength of a Transcendent Mortal 3-dan. If not for research purposes, there was no one who would spend a fortune to purchase it.

With a few thousand spirit stones, one could easily hire several Transcendent Mortal 3-dan experts already.

"You're wrong... What they truly wanted isn't the Soulless Metal Humanoid but the heritage of the soul oracles!"

Hall Master Sai shook his head.

"Heritage?"

Zhao Feiwu turned to look at Hall Master Sai in bewilderment.

"Un, I've examined the Soulless Metal Humanoid and even though it was forged a very long time ago, it's in extremely good condition. If one were to study it carefully, one might be able to uncover the way to forging it! While this puppet only forms a small part of the strength of the soul oracles, it could still become a huge source of fortune," Hall Master Sai said.

"So what if one uncovers the way to forging this puppet? Would one really... use a living human being to forge this darned puppet?" Taken aback, Zhao Feiwu frowned. "If the Master Teacher Pavilion were to learn of it, they would surely eliminate that person."

"It's not to forge the puppet..."

Hall Master Sai shook his head and explained, "There's a limit to a person's lifespan. However, a person's soul can continue existing for a very long time as long as it's well cared for. Four hundred to five hundred years wouldn't be a problem at all. If one learns the way to crafting it, one might learn how to transfer one's soul into this puppet as well. In the ancient times, when the Master Teacher Pavilion was on a crusade against the soul oracles, they managed to escape on many occasions making use of this method..."

"Transferring one's soul to the Soulless Metal Humanoid to sustain oneself?"

Zhao Feiwu widened her eyes in shock.

Even though she had read a lot of books, this was the first time she was hearing of such a peculiar notion.

"That's right!" Hall Master Sai nodded.

He only found out about this after reading through many books concerning the Soulless Metal Humanoid while he was doing his research.

The powers who were interested in it also managed to grab hold of this news through certain means, and thus, they went to great extents to prepare for this auction. After all, there were very few

people who could resist the allure of an extended lifespan.

This was especially for those who were reaching their limit. Even if they had to give up on their humanity to live for just another decade or so, they would be delighted to do so.

"If that's the case, then this auction will surely raise a storm..."

Hearing the conversation of the duo, Zhang Xuan sighed.

If that was truly the case, many people would surely be frenzied over the Soulless Metal Humanoid. If so, the price would surely rise to an astronomical sum.

"Since no one is making an offer, allow me to go first!"

Just as the crowd was contemplating over the matter, an elder below raised his hand and shouted.

"It's the Gold Saint Phantom Hands, Liao Yuxi! He had made a name for himself a hundred years ago—to think that he isn't dead yet!"

"If he were to go first, he might possibly come up with a price that no one will be able to top!"

"Let's just watch on first..."

...

After getting a clear glimpse of the elder's appearance, the crowd immediately discussed with hushed voices.

Gold Saint Phantom Hands was an expert whose name induced fear across the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance a hundred years ago. Everyone had thought that he was already dead since it had been a century since he had disappeared from the public eye. Yet, to think that not only was he alive and kicking, he even attended this auction and became the first one to make his offer.

As an expert who had lived for so many years, no one would believe it if he said that he had nothing valuable on him.

Scanning the surroundings, the Gold Saint Phantom Hands Liao Yuxi said, "The Ursae Majoris Umbrella!"

"Ursae Majoris Umbrella? What's that?"

"It's a Spirit intermediate-tier equipment crafted in reference to the Alpha Ursae Majoris star of the Big Dipper constellation. It is aligned with a formation, and it's an incredible treasure that is both suited for offense and defense. A hundred years ago, the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance trembled before its name. To think that that legendary weapon would appear here!"

"If one were to exchange it for spirit stones, its value would be inestimable..."

...

After hearing Liao Yuxi's words, the faces of the people who recognized the treasure were astonished, and disbelief marked their faces.

"The Ursae Majoris Umbrella might be incredible, but it's definitely not enough to trade for this Soulless Metal Humanoid. Allow me instead! Old mister, judging by your weak aura, you must be in poor health. I have a Thousand-Year-Old Blood Ginseng here. Even if you're nearing the end of your lifespan, if you were to consume it, you will definitely be able to live for another decade or so!"

Before the crowd could recover from their crowd, another cold voice echoed.

Everyone turned their gazes over. The one who had just spoken was a middle-aged man with thick, black eyebrows. He was dressed in a luxurious robe, and he had an arrogant expression on his face.

"It's the Herb Emperor of the Great Herb Gazebo! That is a Thousand-Year-Old Blood Ginseng! It is much more valuable than the Glacier Spirit Grass sold previously, and even the Ursae Majoris Umbrella cannot compete with it!"

"Indeed, the idea of trading with other artifacts is indeed insane. It's just the second offer, but it has already locked out innumerable competitors!"

"How can we compete with this? A Thousand-Year-Old Blood Ginseng isn't something that one can obtain from the market with just money..."

...

Upon hearing the offer of the Herb Emperor, a commotion broke out once more.

Even the eyebrows of the old man on the stage twitched a little. However, he soon calmed down.

Clearly, this wasn't the item that he was in desperate need of.

"The Thousand-Year-Old Blood Ginseng might sound incredible, but if a person who doesn't know how to process it consumes it outright, not only will his lifespan not be expanded, he might even die from the violent energy contained within the herb. Rather than that, don't you think that the grade-4 pinnacle spirit pill [Duodecennial Longevity Pill] is better? Not only does it enhance one's lifespan by twelve years, there are no side effects at all. Isn't it clear which one is better with just a single look?"

An elder harrumphed.

"It's the head of the Apothecary Guild..."

"Duodecennial Longevity Pill, the pill famous for being able to extend a person's lifespan by twelve years... Even though it's a grade-4 pill, it's a known fact that one has to be at least a 5-star apothecary to successfully forge it! What a generous offer this is!"

"Insane, everyone has gone insane..."

Even though only three people had made their offers, the atmosphere had already reached a new high.

There were many powers here who had made ample preparations beforehand and they were confident of obtaining the Soulless Metal Humanoid. However, at this moment, they felt an immense pressure weighing down on them.

"Blood Ginseng and Duodecennial Longevity Pill? As long as one's body is incompatible with either of them, it'll become a deadly poison. I have a Spirit-tier cultivation technique here that is suited for all constitutions. One's cultivation will surely soar swiftly with this! The best way to ensure one's longevity is for one's cultivation to grow!" another person said.

"Cultivation techniques are profound. Without many years of hard work, how can one possibly achieve a breakthrough? On the other hand, I have a grade-4 Bottleneck Breakthrough Pill here. The bottleneck that has been impeding your cultivation all along will be destroyed in an instant, allowing your cultivation to rise accordingly..."

"Don't listen to them! I have a Myriad Manifestation Design. It'll

definitely grant you immense power to dominate others..."

"I have..."

Slowly, all of the powers raised their offers without holding back at all.

There were several powers here who was in no way less affluent than the Appraiser Hall here. Naturally, the artifacts they had to offer were unimaginable.

"Alright, everyone!"

Just as everyone was in the middle of bickering with one another over whose artifact was better, a calm voice sounded. It was from the old man on the stage.

Upon hearing him speak, everyone quickly quietened down.

"All of the items you all have offered are valuable, but it's a pity that those aren't what I wanted."

The old man shook his head.

A person among the crowd harrumphed in displeasure.

"Those aren't what you wanted? Then what do you want? If you

were to tell us, I believe that at least one of us here can offer it to you."

"Indeed, just say it. Even though we're interested in the Soulless Metal Humanoid, we don't have the time to be wasting here with you!"

Seeing that the other party had turned down all of these invaluable artifacts, everyone howled in anger.

It's true that we are interested in buying the Soulless Metal Humanoid, but we don't have the time or effort to be guessing your thoughts. Is there even any basis to what you're doing?

Or are you trying to play us like fools?

"I..." After hesitating for a moment, the old man opened his mouth to speak but his entire body abruptly froze. Then, he slowly closed his eyes and mouth, not saying a word at all.

"What is that fellow doing?"

"Does he think that we're jokes?"

"Damn it!"

Not expecting the other party to still be playing such games, the fury of the crowd surged.

If not in consideration of the location, they might have rushed forward to beat him up.

"Hmm?"

Zhang Xuan found the other party's abrupt freezing to be extremely bizarre. But just as he was about to use the Eye of Insight to take a closer look, his mind suddenly jolted and a book appeared in the Library of Heaven's Path.

"That person executed a battle technique?"

Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

There were only two reasons behind the appearance of a book in the Library of Heaven's Path. Given that he wasn't in physical contact with the other party, the only possibility was that the other party was using a battle technique.

To think that just shutting his mouth was a battle technique in itself... This was way too bizarre!

"I should take a look at the book first!"

Even though Zhang Xuan was perplexed, he knew that there was no point pondering over the matter. Thus, he turned his attention to the Library of Heaven's Path and browsed through the book.

After flipping through the book, a bizarre expression appeared on Zhang Xuan's face.

"Such a matter can happen as well?"

Zhang Xuan blinked his eyes in disbelief.

Chapter 469: I Can Help You Get It Out

While Zhang Xuan was slightly dumbstruck from the content of the book, that old man had already recovered from his bizarre condition. With a pale face, he surveyed the surroundings and said, "I understand the purpose behind why everyone wishes to buy the Soulless Metal Humanoid. If any of you can bring me the treasure I want, on top of this Soulless Metal Humanoid, I'll bring him to the place where I unearthed the metal humanoid as well so that he can explore the secrets of the soul oracle!"

"What?"

"Legend has it that the Soulless Metal Humanoids will accompany their soul oracles' side, buried along with them even upon death... If it's the place where he unearthed the metal humanoid, doesn't it mean that it's the tomb of a soul oracle?"

"After the soul oracles were destroyed by the Master Teacher Pavilion, their heritage disappeared from the world. Even if we can't obtain their heritage, as long as we manage to uncover some information on that ancient occupation, there will surely be many people who would be willing to buy that information for hefty sum."

"More importantly, soul oracles were known for being the most lucrative occupation in ancient times due to the nature of their powers. Even appraisers aren't a match for them. If we were to unearth the tomb of a soul oracle, we would surely obtain a massive fortune."

"Indeed, anyone who gets this opportunity will strike it rich!"

...

Initially, everyone was rather displeased with the old man due to his ridiculous auction proposal. However, after hearing those words, everyone began trembling in agitation.

The responsibility of the Master Teacher Pavilion was to enlighten the world, and they believed in equality in education as well. Unless truly necessary, they would never make a move against other occupations. Back then, it was due to the soul oracles pushing things too far that they were exterminated.

Even if someone were to obtain their heritage now, as long as they didn't use it for malicious intentions, the Master Teacher Pavilion wouldn't interfere in the matter.

In fact, if one were to make use of this opportunity well, one might even be able to win the grooming and protection of the Master Teacher Pavilion.

Besides, given that an intact Soulless Metal Humanoid was dug up, the soul oracle buried in the tomb was likely to be extremely powerful before his death. If they were to find the tomb, even if they failed to obtain the soul oracle's heritage, they would at least be able to find a whole mountain of treasure that was sufficient to send others frenzied.

"I must obtain it!"

"Indeed. But... so many invaluable treasures have been turned down already. The other party doesn't seem to be interested in anything at all! Does he expect us to give our entire clan away?"

"Give our entire clan away? That is provided he's willing to accept it first..."

...

After a short moment of excitement, the crowd fell back into a dilemma, and they rubbed their glabella in stress.

That fellow simply refused to say what he wanted. Everyone here had already offered about everything that could be offered. Was it because the artifacts they offered weren't valuable enough, and he wanted to go for something better?

"I have the seedling of a Thousand Leafed Tree here. Would you be interested in making a trade for this?"

Just as the crowd was in a dilemma, an impassive voice sounded from one of the suites.

"Thousand Leafed Tree?"

"That legendary spirit tree that can fight and guard over a clan?"

"On the single trunk on a Thousand Leafed Tree, there are a thousand branches, and on each of those branches, there are a thousand leaves. After it reaches maturity, just like any Spirit tool, it'll instinctively protect its owner. On top of that, the Thousand Leafed Tree possesses an astonishing cultivation that is on par with even a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan Clarifying Turbidity realm expert!"

"If one were to plant the seedling in one's clan, a hundred year later, the clan will be blessed with a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan guardian which would devote its life to protecting the clan. This is an ultimate treasure that all big clans are vying over!"

"This is way better than those Spirit weapons, pills, and cultivation technique manuals. Who is in that suite? To think that he would be willing to bring out such a valuable treasure!"

...

There was a limit to a person's longevity; no matter how powerful one was, there would eventually come a day which one would have to die. As such, it was impossible for an expert to watch over his clan forever.

But the Thousand Leafed Tree was different. In a hundred years, one would gain a powerful guardian that could ensure the prosperity of the clan for the next hundred years.

It was no different from having a powerful expert looking after

one's clan at all times.

Given such, how could the crowd remain calm before such a treasure.

To trade it for a Soulless Metal Humanoid... This was truly a losing deal.

"This... He can't possibly reject this as well, can he?"

The crowd turned to the old man on the stage, curious to see how he would react.

The Soulless Metal Humanoid was valuable, but it wasn't anything much compared to the Thousand Leafed Tree.

Given the vast difference in the value of the two artifacts... Even a fool would know what to choose.

"I apologize but I'm not interested in the Thousand Leafed Tree."

Just when everyone thought that a new owner of the Soulless Metal Humanoid had been determined, the old man shook his head once more.

"He's not interested?"

"He rejected it outright? This... If it was me, I would have definitely made the trade immediately!"

"Such a waste..."

...

Clearly, the crowd didn't expect that even a Thousand Leafed Tree seedling would be insufficient to move the old man. At this moment, they felt a little frenzied.

What in the world did he want?

"I'll repeat my words once more. As long as anyone can bring out an object that interests me, I'll trade for it immediately. This is a competition over the value of the objects!" The old man shook his hands.

"Interests?"

Hearing those words, everyone fell silent. For a long while, no one made any offer.

You asked for us to offer something that would interest you, but yet, you refused to tell us what is it that you want. Even if we were to continue making offers like that, who knows whether or not we will ever be able to find something that'll interest you. Why in the world did the auction hall bring such a weirdo in?

Glancing at Luo Qin, Elder Chen said, "Manager Luo, in my view, this fellow is here to cause trouble. Besides, I don't think that the auction can benefit from a trade of goods. So, why did the auction hall take up this deal?"

The other party was clearly here to cause trouble!

Who in the world auctions items like that?

Besides, under normal trades, the auction hall would usually claim a small commission from the sales to earn a profit. However, given that the other party was trading the Soulless Metal Humanoid for another artifact, how was the auction hall supposed to claim a commission off the price?

"He isn't causing trouble, he has already paid an advance of 5,000 spirit stones!" Luo Qin shook his head.

"He has already paid even though his item hasn't been successfully auctioned yet?" Elder Chen was taken aback.

Even he was unable to take out so many spirit stones in a single go! To pay this sum in advance... Wasn't he worried that the Soulless Metal Humanoid might not be sold?

"Indeed. So no matter how he auctions his item, the auction hall won't make a loss at all." Luo Qin said.

"Then... What does he really want?"

Elder Chen was perplexed.

Since the other party was able to produce 5,000 spirit stones in a single go, it was highly likely that he didn't lack money at all. On top of that, all of the artifacts offered previously were invaluable treasures that had encompassed all sectors, and yet he turned down all of them, even the Thousand Leafed Tree... So what was his goal in conducting this auction?

"I have no idea either. Ever since his arrival, he has spoken less than ten words to me so how could I possibly know what he's thinking of!"

Luo Qin smiled bitterly.

He was the manager of the auction and the sales of the Soulless Metal Humanoid was mainly arranged by him. However, his interactions with the seller were terribly limited.

They had barely traded more than a few words.

And thus, the other party's thoughts and wants remained an enigma to him.

...

"To turn down even the Thousand Leafed Tree, interesting!"

The young man from Suite 23 chuckled lightly.

He was the one who made the offer for the Thousand Leafed Tree previously. This object was of great value, and even three Soulless Metal Humanoid couldn't match up to a single one of it. Only a top-notch genius of a prestigious sect like him was able to take out an item of such quality easily.

But it was a pity that the other party wasn't interested in it at all.

"Young master, it doesn't seem like he's trying to hike up the price," the elder beside him said.

Previously, the young master said that the reason why that fellow refused to reveal what he wanted was so as to hike up the prices, but from the looks of it, that didn't seem to be the case.

After all, in terms of price, what else could beat the Thousand Leafed Tree?

To turn down even this object, this only went to show that his motive could be to find something that he really needed.

"Regardless of what he needs, he surely won't be able to turn this down!"

Flicking his wrist, a jade token appeared in the young man's hand.

Upon seeing the item, the elder was taken aback. He uttered in shock, "Young master, this item is incomparably valuable. Are you sure... that you want to make an offer with it?"

"That's right!"

A glint flashed across the young man's eyes, and his lips curled up slightly, "Since he has even refused the Thousand Leafed Tree, I can't think of anything else that might interest him."

The elder hesitated. "But... this item is useful to you too..."

"If I have any problems, I can consult teacher straight. So in truth, this item isn't of much value to me!"

The young man waved his hands and said, "Make the offer!"

"Yes!"

Seeing the determination on the other party's face, the elder knew that it was impossible to convince him out of it. Thus, nodding his head, he stepped forward to the windows and bellowed, "A half 5-star master teacher long-range Tutelage Jade Token!"

...

Everyone in the auction hall was wracking their brains to fathom what that fellow on the stage want when the voice sounded. A short moment of silence, and a huge uproar was suddenly generated.

"Half 5-star master teacher? What does that mean?"

"When a master teacher reaches 4-star and above, the difficulty to advance through the ranks would become exponentially more difficult. As such, there were many people who ended up being stuck at 4-star pinnacle their entire life, unable to make a breakthrough. However, there are clearly masters teachers who possessed teaching capability above ordinary 4-star pinnacle but simply haven't reached 5-star yet... Thus, this rank was born!"

"There isn't a half 5-star master teacher in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. Even though half 5-star master teachers are, in the truest sense, 4-star pinnacle master teachers, the value of their Tutelage Jade Tokens far surpasses those of ordinary 4-star pinnacle master teachers... Putting everything aside, even the 21 Tutelage Jade Tokens offered before cannot compare up to this in value!"

"I see. Then what is a long-range Tutelage Jade Token?"

"When one obtains an ordinary Tutelage Jade Token, one can look for a master teacher and request for two hours of his time for a one-to-one guidance session. However... finding this master teacher is likely to expend a significant length of time. On the

other hand, a long-range Tutelage Jade Token isn't restricted by this limitation. A sliver of the master teacher's soul has been infused into the jade token, and when one drips a droplet of blood on it, one will be able to enter an illusionary classroom where one's problems can be solved.

"In other words, as long as one possesses this item, it's as good as having a half 5-star master teacher around you. No matter what cultivation problem one has, one can enquire about it at any moment. Even though it's just a one-time use object, its value is unimaginable!"

Being able to undergo the guidance of a half 5-star master teacher on the spot and running around the world with the jade token in hand to look for the specific half 5-star master teacher were two vastly different concepts.

The value of this jade token definitely far surpassed that of the previous 21 jade tokens.

Having understood this, everyone turned to the old man on the stage to see how he would choose.

If he were to reject this as well, then no one here would probably be able to produce a treasure to his liking.

"This..."

The old man also clearly didn't expect the person from the suite

to take out such a valuable object. Hesitation clearly surfaced on his expression, and after a moment, he gritted his teeth and said, "Alright, I'll agree to the trade!"

"He agreed to the trade?"

"Well, I can't imagine him doing otherwise..."

Hearing that the other party had agreed to it, even though the crowd was a little disappointed, they knew that the value of this jade token was simply too great for anyone to resist.

"This is more like it..."

The young man from Suite 23 chuckled lightly upon hearing the old man agree to it.

He had even gone to the extent of taking out this treasure. If the other party still continued to turn him down, there would be nothing else he could do.

Just as he was preparing to go down and conduct the trade with the old man, a nonchalant voice suddenly sounded from Suite 1.

"There's no need to rush into an agreement, I haven't made my offer yet!"

"You? Do you think that you can produce something even more

valuable than my Tutelage Jade Token?"

The young man stood up in displeasure.

"I can't say for sure whether the thing I can offer is of greater value because my offer is only a single sentence..."

A calm voice sounded, "I can help you... get it out!"

"What did you say?"

Hearing those words, the old man standing on the stage suddenly froze and his face paled. Then, he began to tremble non-stop.

Chapter 470: Zhang Xuan's Move [2in1]

Help you get it out?

The entire auction hall fell silent. The respectable figures of Honghai City stared at one another with so much frustration that they were about to explode.

What the heck was this situation?

Who in the world was that hero in Suite 1?

Your interest...

... is way too heavy!

More importantly, he didn't seem to be in the least embarrassed spouting such dirty words in public; on the contrary, he spoke forcefully and proudly...

Big brother, where in the world does your confidence come from?

Pu!

Hearing those words, the young man from Suite 23 immediately spat out the mouthful of tea that he had just drunk at the elder opposite of him.

The heck! I gave out a long-range Tutelage Jade Token—that is literally worth cities, and its value doesn't lose out to even a Spirit high-tier equipment... If you had made a normal offer, I would still overlook it. After all, it's a fair competition. I can only concede if my financial ability is unable to match up to yours.

But... 'help you get it out', what the heck was that?

The fellow selling the Soulless Metal Humanoid was already in his declining years, and he looked as though he could pass away at any moment. Yet, you want to help him g-get it out?

Am I being too dirty-minded or is your taste really that heavy?

"That..."

The elder beside the young man wiped the tea off his face, and it took him a long moment before he recovered from the shock. "Young master, that person doesn't have long to live so I doubt that he would be tempted by the pleasures of the body. Besides, even if he is interested, he could simply head to a brothel. Why should he resort to finding a male..."

"Cough cough..."

After a bout of violent coughing, the young man finally managed to prevent himself from choking to death. "I know that much. Just that... that fellow from Suite 1 sure is an incredible fellow to be

able to say such words... It seems like we aren't the only one astounded by his words. Even that old fellow up there is about to faint!"

"Indeed! No normal cultivator would accept such a depraved offer. How can someone be so shameless?" the elder replied indignantly. In the midst of his words, the ruckus below suddenly disappeared, and following closely, an agitated and excited voice sounded.

"Mister, do you... mean your words?" The old man on the auction stage was trembling in excitement. His face was flushed, seemingly unable to believe the other party's words.

"Of course I do! As long as you pass the Soulless Metal Humanoid to me, I'll try my best to help you get it out!" the calm voice from Suite 1 replied.

"Alright then, I'll agree to it!" Upon hearing the other party's confirmation, the old man nodded his head immediately.

Pu!

"If only I'd known earlier, I would have prepared a few beautiful girls... or perhaps dashing men..."

Hearing the old man agreeing to the matter readily, everyone felt blood welling up in their chest and they nearly fainted.

This works as well?

Cultivation technique, weapons, Thousand Leafed Tree, and even a half 5-star long-range Tutelage Jade Token... You turned all of them down just for this? Your interest sure is unique!

To abandon all of these treasures just for a short moment of pleasure... More importantly, the other party is a male... You have truly opened up our eyes today.

What is even more impressive is how the fellow in Suite 1 can speak such words in public without the slightest bit of embarrassment...

And most importantly of all, how could you tell that the old man on stage has such an interest?

Could it be that you are also...

Everyone shuddered.

"He agreed to it?"

The young man from Suite 23 trembled. For that moment, it felt as though the skies were rumbling.

Did he really come to a prestigious auction or was this truly a place for such exchanges?

Putting aside how his 4-star Tutelage Jade Tokens were turned down from spirit stones, now, even his Thousand Leafed Tree and the even more valuable half 5-star long-range Tutelage Jade Token was rejected, all for just... a moment of relief!

Their world horizons shattered in an instant.

"He... agreed to it!" The elder uttered through trembling lips.

"Damn it! If only I knew that that fellow has such interests, I wouldn't have wasted so much effort!" After a moment of dismal, a vicious glint flashed past the young man's face, and he turned around to command. "Make the offer saying that we can help him get it out as well. Furthermore, we'll agree to all conditions he sets, regardless of what poses he wants!"

"Young master, you..." The elder's body froze. "Isn't your sacrifice... a little too great?"

To go so far for a Soulless Metal Humanoid... Young master sure is vicious to himself!

"Sacrifice? Sacrifice your head! Do you expect me to do it? You think that I, Song Chao, a 4-star master teacher, would do such a thing? You must be joking! If someone has to go, it'll be you. As long as he agrees to sell the Soulless Metal Humanoid to me, you'll have to serve him well!"

The young man, Song Chao, harrumphed.

"Me?" It was just a moment ago that the elder thought that the young master was extremely noble, but after hearing those words, he shuddered and nearly burst into tears.

Do you have to be so callous?

I watched you grow up from a young boy to a young man, and I've followed behind you for so many years. To sell me out like that... surely this isn't right...

Who did I offend? I'm already so old and yet I still have to give up my reputation and decency... to please not a young lady but a... decrepit, old man?

"Hurry up! Once they conduct the trade, it'll be too late!" Seeing the other party's warped face, Song Chao hurriedly urged him on.

"Yes!" Even though the elder was reluctant to do so, he still stepped forward to the window and said, "Our young master wishes to make an offer. He's willing to help you get it out as well!"

"Ah? Another one?"

"The heck! There's another one who has given up on his decency as well? How in the world did a normal auction hall turn into a location where such deals are made?"

"Are they all mad?"

The entire auction hall flew into a frenzy.

To think that there would be another one to make such an offer. Where's their pride? Where's their common decency?

For this Soulless Metal Humanoid, you all are willing to give up even your dignity?

While the stage below was in a frenzy, in Suite 1, Zhang Xuan was also perplexed. He stood up and facing the suite which had just made the offer, he asked, "You can help him get it out as well? How do you intend to do it? Shall we compete to see whose technique is better so that he can make a better choice?"

Based on what he knew, it should be very hard to get that thing out. Even with the omniscient Library of Heaven's Path, Zhang Xuan still found the matter troublesome. Thus, he was curious to see what kind of method the other party was going to use.

Pu!

Hearing those words, Song Chao felt as though a snake was diving around in his chest, and he nearly tore his hair out with his hands.

Can you at least have some pride?

To compete over whose technique is better... Is it really alright for you to say such things in public? Do you have to be so fierce?

Furthermore, what is there to compete about it? The main issue at hand should be just to satisfy him, right?

The mouth of the elder beside Song Chao twitched, and tears streamed down his face. Doomed, he knew that his reputation would surely be tarnished at this point...

"Why? You can't say anything? To make such a claim despite being incapable, are you intentionally trying to jack up the price?" Upon seeing that there was no response from Suite 23, the person from Suite 1 continued.

"I-I... What other kind of techniques can I use? Of course it's the one that everyone knows of..." Seeing that the elder had been shocked speechless, Song Chao couldn't hold himself back anymore so he harrumphed.

"The one that everyone knows of?"

Hearing the other party's frenzied words, Zhang Xuan was even more perplexed, "What kind of method is that? You should clarify yourself. He has been plagued by an evil spirit and he's currently going through great anguish. What method do you intend to use to get it out? If it is feasible, I'm willing to let you give it a try first."

"Plagued by an evil spirit? Get it out? Th-this..." Song Chao's body swayed and his face paled. If there was a hole in the ground, he would definitely jump in this very instant.

What the heck was this!

Can your words not be that darned?

You kept saying 'get it out' so I thought you were talking about that... I was even willing to have my close subordinate give up his decency to compete with you and it turned out to be getting an evil spirit out...

You must be toying with me!

"So it's to force an evil spirit out..."

"The plague of an evil spirit is incomparably dangerous. Under such circumstances, one's life hinges by a thread. It's no wonder that person is refusing all treasures. After all, given that his life is in danger, what use are those treasures? What he wants is probably a way to expel the evil spirit, but if that is the case... Why didn't he say anything?"

"That is exactly what stumped me as well... However, being plagued by an evil spirit is an extremely rare occurrence. I've only read about it from some ancient books, how in the world did that fellow manage to stumble by it?"

"Soul oracles are skilled in attacking the souls of others. He must have suffered the retaliation of the evil spirits from the soul oracle whose tomb he dug up..."

...

Hearing the words of the person from Suite 1, everyone came to an understanding and wiped away their cold sweat.

So it wasn't what they were thinking. What the other party meant was to get the evil spirit out. It seemed like they were the ones who were corrupted...

"I see..."

Hall Master Sai heaved a huge sigh of relief and his face flushed red.

Zhang shi's previous words had nearly scared him to death. He had really thought that the other party had such heavy preferences... Only after hearing this did he come to a realization.

In truth, Zhang Xuan also didn't expect his words to incur such a huge misunderstanding. His mind had been too absorbed into getting the Soulless Metal Humanoid that he'd failed to consider the possible innuendo in his words.

Just like everyone guessed, the reason behind the affliction of the old man selling the Soulless Metal Humanoid was indeed vengeance from the soul oracle whose tomb was dug up. With his life at stake, it was natural that no treasure would be able to interest him. It was because he had been trying to suppress the evil spirit through the use of battle technique that the Library of Heaven's Path compiled a book on him.

It was because of that that Zhang Xuan could comprehend what was happening.

Recovering from the awkward atmosphere, Song Chao asked, "Based on what I know, the plague of an evil spirit concerns the subject of souls. Since you said that you are able to... get it out, does it mean that you are skilled in that subject?"

Due to the intricacies behind souls, even master teachers would be stumped before this problem. Based on the other party's voice, he seemed to be rather young. Thus, Song Chao was curious to know what method the other party in mind.

The crowd immediately turned their gazes over, and even the old man on the stage seemed a little anxious at this point. He was worried that the man in the suite was just making empty promises.

"The plague of an evil spirit is similar to a lethal poison corroding one's soul. There's nothing I can do about that!" The voice from the suite echoed.

"Nothing you can do about that? Then..." Everyone nearly

fainted. The other party had declared so confidently a moment ago and yet he was saying that he was helpless at this point in time. Wasn't this change in attitude a little too rapid?

Having his hope shattered when it was so close to him, the old man couldn't retain his calmness. He immediately asked anxiously, "Then why did you say that you can help me get it out..."

"Since I can discern your condition and describe it so aptly, naturally, I have my own means!"

Man from the suite chuckled.

"This..." The old man was baffled.

The other party had clearly stated that he was helpless toward the plague of the evil spirit. But now, he was claiming that he had a solution in mind. Was that fellow playing him a fool or was there some secret meaning behind those words that he failed to comprehend?

Just as the old man was still stuck in bewilderment, the voice from the suite continued, "Alright, hand the Soulless Metal Humanoid to me and I'll solve your problem. There are too many people here so it's not convenient for me to go into detail!"

"Alright!" After a moment of hesitation, the old man surveyed the surroundings and bowed, "I thank everyone here for participating in the auction of the Soulless Metal Humanoid. Pardon me, but I've

managed to find a buyer already. Thus, I can only apologize to everyone here!"

After finishing his words, the old man grabbed the Soulless Metal Humanoid.

Hu!

With a light smile, the old man put the metal humanoid lying vertically on the stage away before walking off.

"Young master, what do we do?"

Seeing that the buyer had been confirmed, the elder in Suite 23 started to panic.

The young master had come over excitedly with a huge fortune in hand just to buy this Soulless Metal Humanoid but in the end... he didn't manage to spend a single cent. He could still accept it if the other party's financial ability was above that of his, but the problem was that... the other party managed to win over the metal humanoid with just a single word without spending a single cent...

The more he thought about it, the more dismal he felt.

"What else can we do? Are you able to expel the evil spirit plaguing him?" Song Chao asked with a darkened complexion.

"I... can't!" The elder shook his head.

The plague of a spirit involved the subject of soul. Even though his cultivation and knowledge were impressive, there was nothing we could do about the seller's problem as well.

"Forget it. Go and look into who the person in Suite 1 is. We'll decide on our actions afterward!" Song Chao instructed.

"Yes!" The elder nodded his head.

If he didn't even know who the enemy was, how could he make suitable preparations?

"To be capable of produce a seventh level painting, discern that the seller is plagued by an evil spirit, and show no interest in 4-star Tutelage Jade Tokens... That person in Suite 1 sure is a mysterious figure. Investigate him! Make sure to dig up every single bit of information about him!"

Song Chao wasn't the only curious one. Everyone in the auction was also dying to know whom that formidable figure in Suite 1 was, especially given how he was able to get Hall Master Sai willingly share his suite with him.

...

"This is the Soulless Metal Humanoid?"

In a vast room in the Appraiser Hall, Zhang Xuan studied the puppet on the floor in interest.

The sale of the Soulless Metal Humanoid meant that the auction had come to an end. Under Manager Luo's lead, the old man was brought to the room.

The metal humanoid was around the size of a real human but its physique was much more muscular. As though crafted using metal, its skin was also gold in color. It was hard to tell the person's original appearance under the metal coating.

Knowing that this wasn't the time to be examining the object, Zhang Xuan stored it in his storage ring right after confirming the product was authentic. Then, he turned to look at the old man before him.

"Mister, please cure me of my affliction!" The old man hurriedly clasped his fist.

In truth, after seeing that the other party was a young man, he suffered a breakdown.

After all, no matter how talented a person was, his extent of knowledge was still limited by his age. He thought that the person who was able to tell that he was plagued by an evil spirit should at least be an old man who was beyond his sixties... He didn't think that the other party would be so young, and he found it hard to believe that such a young person could cure him of his affliction.

If not for the other party pointing out his condition accurately, he would have surely thought that this was a scam.

"Un!"

Nodding his head, Zhang Xuan started circling around the other party silently. Then, lifting his eyebrow, he said, "Hall Master Sai and Elder Jin, I have something that I would like to trouble you two!"

"Zhang shi, there is no need to stand on ceremony. Feel free to speak whatever that's on your mind!"

The duo nodded.

Even though each of their cultivation was higher than the lad before him, the latter had simply performed too many extraordinary miracles. They didn't dare view him as a junior.

"Simple..." Zhang Xuan sent a telepathic message over.

"This..."

Hearing Zhang Xuan's message, the duo stared at one another in shock.

After a moment of hesitation, Hall Master Sai awkwardly asked,

"Zhang shi... Surely this isn't good?"

"Just do as I say. I know what I'm doing!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

"Alright!"

The duo gritted their teeth.

Seeing the look of difficulty on the faces of the two elders, everyone was perplexed, especially the old man selling the Soulless Metal Humanoid.

Does my treatment require the help of these two?

"Pardon me!"

Just as he was perplexed, he heard Hall Master Sai and Jin Conghai harrumph at the same moment. Then, the duo lifted their palms and two surges of zhenqi surged into the surroundings, sealing the entire area from the world.

"What are you all trying to do?"

The old man frowned.

Through this action, the duo had sealed his path of escape.

In other words, they planned to make a move on him!

"Do you all... intend to steal the Soulless Metal Humanoid?"

Upon realizing something, the old man's eyes narrowed.

The Soulless Metal Humanoid was incomparably valuable. As just a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle cultivator, he was still a far way from becoming one of the top experts of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. He knew that if he were to spread the word, there was a high possibility that someone might come after him for it.

Thus, as soon as he obtained the object, he immediately rushed to the Appraiser Hall. He felt that given the Appraiser Hall's reputation, they shouldn't conduct despicable acts like stealing the goods of its customers. Yet, to think that... the respectable hall master would make a move on him himself!

"Zhang shi..."

Luo Qin also didn't expect such a sight to occur and his face paled. To think that Zhang Xuan would resort to this eventually!

If the Appraiser Guild were to commit such actions, the reputation of the auction hall would also go down to the drain. An auction hall that had lost its credibility would surely lose all of its customers.

"Don't worry. If I intended to kill him, he would already be long dead. There would have been no need for us to seal his surroundings at all." Zhang Xuan rolled his eyes.

No matter what, he was a master teacher. The other party should have been able to see through the benevolent face he had, why was the other party treating him as though a villain who would resort to such petty crimes?

To kill a person and rob him of his possession... To think that you can even think of this!

It was just a Soulless Metal Humanoid. Its value still wasn't sufficient for Zhang Xuan to go to such an extent.

"That's good..."

Hearing Zhang Xuan's promise, Luo Qin heaved a sigh of relief. Turning around, he saw Hall Master Sai and Elder Jin making a move simultaneously. The old man could barely take two blows before he was subdued. Then, the duo sealed his cultivation, leaving him completely powerless.

These two were top-notch experts. With their strength, dealing with a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle cultivator was a walk in the park.

Seeing that the other party had only sealed his cultivation, the old man knew that he was overthinking it and he heaved a long

sigh of relief. But still, baffled by the condition, he asked, "What do you all intend to do?"

"Didn't you ask me to expel the evil spirit in you? If we don't limit your movement, how can we expel the evil spirit?"

Zhang Xuan smiled.

Hearing that the sealing of his cultivation was a necessary procedure to expelling the evil spirit, the old man nodded his head and said, "I see! I'll be depending on you then, mister!"

"Un!"

Nodding his head, Zhang Xuan stepped forward. The edges of his lip slowly curled up as he raised his hands.

Pah!

His palm struck the other party's face.

"You..."

The strike had caused the old man to flip on the spot and crash onto the floor. Dumbfounded, the old man stared at Zhang Xuan with widened eyes.

What was going on?

In exchange for the Soulless Metal Humanoid, you are supposed to expel the evil spirit within me. Yet, you had someone seal my cultivation first before... then came over here to slap me... What are you up to?

The old man was just about to ask about the situation when a kick came flying toward him.

Peng!

"What is going on..."

His words were jammed back into his mouth by the kick, and he was sent flying a few meters away.

Struggling to his feet, the old man's eyes were filled with fury. He was about to turn insane at any point now.

But of course, he wasn't the only one that was about to turn insane. Everyone in the room looked as though they had seen a ghost.

This was especially so for Luo Qin. At this point, he nearly couldn't hold back his tears anymore.

Didn't you say that... you aren't intending to kill the other party

and steal his possessions? Even if you aren't going to kill him, beating the other party up and taking his possession like that... isn't alright either...

Chapter 471: Do You Dare?

Peng peng peng peng!

With his cultivation sealed, how could the old man withstand Zhang Xuan's attacks. In just a few moments, he was reduced to a pig head.

"I want to kill you..."

The reason why he brought the Soulless Metal Humanoid here was so that he could be cured of his affliction. Yet, he was beaten up like that instead. Unable to hold himself back anymore, the old man clenched his teeth in anger and his eyes turned bloodshot.

"Kill me? I thought you wanted to use my hand to kill him? Why do you want to kill me?"

Smiling faintly, Zhang Xuan looked at the old man with a look of leisure.

"W-What are you saying? I don't know what you are getting at!"

Hearing those words, the old man panicked for a moment. However, he concealed it swiftly.

"You don't know? Coming over here to possess another person's body and going to the extent of trying to eradicate his soul... and

you tell me that you don't know anything at all?"

Zhang Xuan's lips curled him in disdain.

"Possess?"

Jin Conghai, Hall Master Sai, and the others were taken aback. They glanced at the old man once more, but this time, with wariness.

Possession was the means of a soul oracle, and it was also known as 'borrowing a body to reanimate a soul'. Just as the name hinted at, a soul oracle whose lifespan was coming to an end could forcefully suppress or destroy a person's soul and make use of their body to come alive again.

This was an extremely mysterious and vile process.

"Don't worry, he hasn't succeeded yet!" Seeing the wariness in everyone's eyes, Zhang Xuan chuckled. "If he had succeeded already, there'd be nothing I could do about the matter anymore."

Zhang Xuan had previously said that he couldn't do anything if the old man was plagued by an evil spirit, and these words had left everyone stumped. However, it seemed that instead of being plagued by an evil spirit, this fellow was possessed instead.

"You... Don't spout nonsense! I am myself, and I've only been plagued by an evil spirit..." The old man clenched his jaws.

"You've been plagued by an evil spirit?"

Zhang Xuan shook his head. Circling around the old man with his hands behind his back, Zhang Xuan said, "I don't know what method you used to suppress the original host's soul, but I can still roughly tell what happened.

"Despite coming to the auction hall to sell the Soulless Metal Humanoid, you refused to say what you wanted and kept everyone guessing... If I'm not wrong, at that moment, the original host's soul is still in control of the body. It wasn't that he didn't want to say anything but that you were exerting a pressure on him to prevent him from speaking up!

"Under the pressure from everyone else, he grew agitated and this created an opening for you to strike... Then, you said that you'd take the person who managed to buy the Soulless Metal Humanoid to the tomb of the soul oracle. If I'm not mistaken, you probably intended to lure someone there and activate some traps so as to claim the bodies of a few more experts!"

Zhang Xuan harrumphed. "Otherwise, how could a person who is on the verge of death due to being plagued by an evil spirit in the soul oracle tomb propose to head there a second time? Unless he's masochistic and eager to die, there's no way a rational person would do so!"

"This..."

Jin Conghai and Hall Master Sai shuddered in shock.

Previously, back in the auction hall, under the intense questioning of the crowd, the old man did seem to intend to say something, but his body simply shook and he fell silent. Afterward, he immediately mentioned the issue regarding the soul oracle tomb.

Thinking back, it did seem slightly bizarre.

Even though the old man managed to obtain the invaluable Soulless Metal Humanoid in the soul oracle tomb, he was possessed as well, putting him on the verge of death. It didn't make any sense for him to want to return back to such a dangerous place.

It was clearly a huge flaw in logic.

It was a pity that everyone had been blinded by the heritage of the soul oracle and the treasures contained within the tomb and failed to consider this logic lapse.

"I only intended to hike up the prices..." the old man said.

"Hike up the prices? Alright!"

Zhang Xuan chuckled softly. "Elder Jin and Hall Master Sai, may I trouble you two to release the seal on him?"

"Release the seal?"

The duo was taken aback.

Even though Zhang Xuan seemed to have struck the old man viciously, they were actually just superficial wounds. Once the seal was released, the other party would regain the cultivation level of a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan. If so, Zhang Xuan surely wouldn't be a match for the other party.

"Don't worry!" Knowing what the duo was worried about, Zhang Xuan shot them a reassuring gaze.

"Alright!"

Even though Zhang shi was still young, he never did anything he wasn't certain of. Thus, the duo let go simultaneously.

Hu!

The seal suppressing the old man's cultivation vanished and strength returned to his body.

"Humph, since you all aren't capable of expelling the evil spirit at all, I'll be taking my leave. Farewell!"

After the seal was released, the old man heaved a sigh of relief and prepared to leave.

However, barely after he took two steps, a young man blocked his path.

"Hah, with just your cultivation, do you think that you can stop me?" the old man sneered coldly.

Even though he couldn't tell the exact strength of the young man before him, from the fact that he got others to fight in his place, he could deduce that the other party's strength was inferior to his.

"Give it a try then!" Zhang Xuan didn't bother saying anything unnecessary. Lifting his leg, he sent a kick toward the other party.

"Humph!"

The old man's complexion darkened. His palm immediately struck forward.

However, before he could strike anything, he felt an ache at his chest.

Peng!

He was sent flying, and he crashed heavily to the ground.

"You..."

The old man narrowed his eyes.

"Are you very surprised?" Zhang Xuan stepped forward and lifting his hands, he struck the other party.

Pah!

The shape of a palm was printed on the face of the old man as he fell back down to the ground.

"This..."

The crowd stared at one another.

"A Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle cultivator isn't able to match a Half-Transcension cultivator. Wha-what... is going on?"

"I don't understand either..."

The old man clearly possessed the cultivation of a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan. When he was sealed, everyone had witnessed the immense strength that he possessed. How in the world did he get subdued so easily? It was as if he couldn't retaliate against a Half-Transcension cultivator at all!

Even though Zhang Shi possessed the strength beyond that of his cultivation realm, dealing with a Transcendent Mortal 1-dan

primary stage cultivator would already be tough. Smashing a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle cultivator like that so easily was completely out of the question.

"Could it be that teacher has grown stronger again?"

In contrast to everyone's shock, Zhao Ya and the others looked excited.

Their teacher's ability to achieve breakthroughs as easily as drinking water had left a lasting impression in their mind. Seeing the Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle cultivator being crushed so easily made them think that Zhang Xuan had achieved a huge breakthrough once more.

"No, that's not it... It's the old man who has become weaker! His current fighting prowess is only that of a Transcendent Mortal 1-dan primary stage cultivator!" Zhao Feiwu said.

Due to the limitations of her physical body, she had never cultivated before. Even so, having read through innumerable books, her knowledge and eye of discernment were extraordinary.

"Un, gongzi is right. His current fighting prowess is at most Transcendent Mortal 1-dan primary stage only. Just that... for some reason, I can certainly feel the strength of a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle flowing within him!" Jin Conghai said.

"Despite having the cultivation of a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan

pinnacle, his fighting prowess is only that of a Transcendent Mortal 1-dan primary stage. This..."

Hearing those words, Zhao Ya and the others were baffled.

Luo Qin was also bewildered.

"Did you hear that? I'm not the only one who has noticed it. Everyone can tell as much too. What else do you have to say?"

Halting his attack, Zhang Xuan smiled at the old man whom he had just beaten up.

"It's because... I'm injured. That's why I can't display my full strength..."

The old man gritted his teeth.

Having predicted that the other party would surely bring up such an argument, Zhang Xuan refuted, "Even if you're injured, it's impossible for your strength to fall by two realms!"

"Zhang shi, what's going on?"

Seeing that the old man was unable to explain himself, Hall Master Sai couldn't hold back his curiosity anymore and asked.

"Simple. The strength of the soul possessing and the person being possessed are of different cultivation! If I'm not mistaken, the one possessed has the cultivation of Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle whereas the soul possessing only has the cultivation of Transcendent Mortal 1-dan primary stage!"

Zhang Xuan continued, "Even though he has taken over the body already, he hasn't adapted fully to it yet. On top of that, my pummeling has made it harder for his physical body and soul to harmonize with one another. As such, even though he is able to move the body easily, he isn't able to move the Origin Energy in the other party's body, thus resulting in his weakness!"

When Zhang Xuan first saw the old man on the stage of the auction hall, he managed to see numerous flaws through the Eye of Insight. This, in itself, had created doubts in his mind.

Under normal circumstances, given his current cultivation, he would only be able to peer into the flaws of a Transcendent Mortal 1-dan primary stage cultivator at most... Yet, he was able to see the problems of a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle. Thinking about it now, it was probably due to the soul that had possessed this body being of Transcendent Mortal 1-dan primary stage.

From the very start, it was extremely rare for a soul to have high affinity with the body possessed. The trauma caused to the body under such a state would result in the body rejecting the soul of the possessor... And thus, even though the old man clearly had the cultivation of Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle, he was unable to display it at all.

"Y-you..."

The old man's face paled.

He could have come up with a logical excuse for it if he had sufficient time. However, now that everything was explained so rationally, even if he were to explain now, it would already be too late.

After all, the injuries dealt to him previously were just superficial wounds. To a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle cultivator, those were negligible.

"There's no need for you to be so surprised. The reason why I said that an evil soul is plaguing you is so as to lower your guard. This way, you'll think that this is a good opportunity to get rid of the other soul competing with you over the body through my hands... Am I right?"

Zhang Xuan pushed on.

Even though the other party had managed to take over the old man's body, he had yet to eradicate the original host's soul. In fact, the original host's soul was still on the upper hand just a moment ago.

Otherwise, the old man wouldn't have been able to bring the Soulless Metal Humanoid here and auction it for a way to suppress him.

The plan of the possessing soul was indeed brilliant. If it was anyone else, they would have surely fallen for the trick and killed the original host's soul, thus completing the possession. But... it was a pity that he met with Zhang Xuan.

There was nothing that could conceal itself from the heavens. Putting aside a soul, even a speck of dust couldn't escape from its sight.

"You... Since you've managed to see through it, there's no need for me to hide any longer. That's right, I possessed this fellow!"

Seeing that there was no way to hide anymore, the old man stood up and harrumphed coldly.

"To think that it is really true!"

"A Transcendent Mortal 1-dan soul possessing a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle cultivator's body..."

Hearing the other party agree to it, everyone's faces turned pale.

There were almost two realms of difference between Transcendent Mortal 1-dan primary and Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle. That was an entire world of difference in terms of fighting prowess. It was a gap that was impossible to breach. Yet, the soul still managed to possess the body successfully...

How in the world did it succeed?

That was way too fearsome!

"It's good that you've admitted to it! In truth... all those that I said before are just my conjectures. If you didn't admit to it, I would have no way of proving the matter..." Zhang Xuan said.

What Zhang Xuan said was the truth.

The Library of Heaven's Path only reflected flaws. It wouldn't analyze a situation or provide answers for Zhang Xuan.

He only deduced the entire situation by stringing all of the flaws reflected together through logic. He also didn't expect that... he would be spot-on.

"You..."

The old man's face reddened and he nearly spewed blood.

If only he'd known that it was a conjecture, he would have never admitted to it.

Now, it would be hopeless even if he tried to deny it...

"There's no need for you to act so gleefully!"

Narrowing his eyes, the old man tossed aside his dismal and sneered coldly, "My soul is in control now. Even if you know that I've possessed the body, what can you do? Do you intend to kill me? Or rather, I should ask...

"Do you dare?"

Chapter 472: Possessing Sun Qiang

The soul that is in control effectively becomes the owner of the body. If another soul couldn't make it in time to fill up the gap following that soul's expulsion, there was a high possibility that the body might die, thus becoming a corpse.

At the very least, at the current situation, even though the previous host's soul was suppressed, it still stood a chance. Once the body became a corpse, he would be doomed.

"Zhang shi, the study of the soul is an incomparably complex subject. Even gods dare not claim to fully understand it. Given that he's in control now, if the other soul is unable to take back control in time... that would be no different from murder!" Hall Master Sai's expression turned grim.

"Indeed! You should think twice!" Luo Qin also panicked.

Everyone knew that the old man was here to conduct a trade. If he were to die here, the reputation of the auction hall would fall into the gutters.

"I should indeed think twice!" Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

They were right. The topic of souls was incredibly profound—conventional rules may not necessarily apply to it. If Zhang Xuan fails to resolve the issue properly, the old man might become an idiot or even worse, meet his demise. If so, it would be hard for him to avoid responsibility.

"Many people know about our trade. If anything happens to me, the Appraiser Hall and auction hall will be doomed!"

Seeing the hesitation in everyone's eyes, the old man chuckled, "Why don't I suggest something? Let's continue on with our trade. I'll give you the Soulless Metal Humanoid but... in exchange, you have to eradicate the soul of the previous host for me! In the end, regardless of whether you are trading with me or him, you will obtain the Soulless Metal Humanoid, so why should you take the risk?"

There was nothing for Zhang Xuan to lose from accepting his deal. On the contrary, if he were to insist on saving the previous host, it was one thing if he succeeded, but what if he were to fail?

"Zhang shi..."

Luo Qin looked at Zhang Xuan anxiously.

He was a businessman and, in his view, there was nothing profitable from going through so much risk to save a mere passer-by.

In any case, everyone only knew that this fellow was plagued by an evil spirit. Regardless of which one was killed, as long as he walked out of the Appraiser Hall alive, the auction hall's reputation could be retained.

"Your words do make sense! My goal is the Soulless Metal Humanoid so there's indeed no need for me to take this risk."

Sighing, Zhang Xuan eyebrows shot up and he glanced at the old man indifferently, "However, did you just say that there's nothing I can do? I happen to have just thought of one method and I would like to give it a try..."

"Try?"

Not expecting the other party to want to make a move despite having persuaded him the entire time, Luo Qin's face reddened in panic.

Are you trying it out just for fun?

You do know that a life is at stake here right...

"Gongzi..."

Worried, Jin Conghai turned to gongzi in hopes of getting him to convince Zhang Xuan otherwise.

But this time, Zhao Feiwu waved his hands grimly and said, "Don't. This is the responsibility and mission of a master teacher. This isn't something he should avoid!"

Behind the respect and prestige master teachers possessed was

heavy responsibility.

Zhang Xuan didn't know the name and background of this old man, and he never even interacted with him before. However... if he were to overlook his life and death, what would be left of his morals?

How could an immoral person enlighten the world and guide his students?

If one is upright, his intentions will be obeyed without a command. If one isn't upright, his command will not move anyone.

Guiding a student wasn't just about imparting him the best cultivation technique so that they could grow strong. More importantly, one had to instill the correct values in them.

Otherwise, even if they were to mature, they would only become scum and bring harm to the world. If so, master teachers would lose their purpose of existence.

"This..."

Jin Conghai froze, and he clenched his fists tightly.

As a poison master, he could resort to underhanded tricks to achieve his goals. However, the other party was different. He was a master teacher whose responsibility was to enlighten the world. If

he were to cower before difficulty, how could he win the hearts of his student?

...

The old man didn't expect for Zhang Xuan to adamantly choose to deal with him despite the advantages and disadvantages being set out clearly. His face darkened and he said, "So, you intend to stand against me?"

"Stand against you? You're thinking too much. I just want to expel you. After all, this body doesn't belong to you!"

Shaking his head, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and a few silver needles appeared on his palm.

"Silver needles? You intend to use this to deal me, a soul?"

He thought that the other party had some idea in mind but after seeing what the other party took out, the old man burst into laughter.

Those needles might be able to heal one's physical injuries and resolve one's cultivation bottleneck... But to deal with a soul? You must be joking!

It was as though using an arrow to shoot a fly — futile.

Disregarding the old man's contempt, Zhang Xuan infused a surge of zhenqi into the needles and flicked his finger. A cold gleam flashed as the needles shot through the air.

"Needles are completely ineffective against souls..."

Seeing that Zhang Xuan really intended to use those needles to deal with the old man, Hall Master Sai slapped his face.

Given how confident the other party was, he thought that he might have some good idea in mind. In the end, it seemed like the other party intended to just try everything that seemed plausible.

Hall Master Sai had read quite a few books on soul oracles and so he knew a bit about souls. Souls were intangible and coming into contact with it through material objects was impossible.

It was just like using one's sword to cut air. Even if the needle struck the old man, it would be ineffective on the intangible soul. Perhaps, it might even cause meridian blockage, resulting in internal injuries for the body.

"To expel a soul, one has to prepare plain clothes, yellow amulets, an altar of tributes to the heavens, and a formation as well. There's no way a silver needle can work..."

Knowing that the method wouldn't work, Hall Master Sai shook his head. He immediately revealed everything he knew in hopes that Zhang Xuan could follow the conventional method. However,

halfway through his words, he gulped down a mouthful of saliva and started trembling. "How... is this possible?"

As soon as the silver needle pierced into the arrogant old man's body, the latter's face immediately paled.

Fear surfaced in his eyes. He wanted to escape, but he fell to the ground instead, convulsing ceaselessly.

With just a single needle, the other party's soul lost control?

This... How in the world did he manage to do it?

If souls were that easy to deal with, soul oracles wouldn't have been such a feared existence back then so as to require the Master Teacher Pavilion to make a move personally.

"Y-your zhenqi..."

While Hall Master Sai and the others were overwhelmed with shock, the old man was frenzied.

He had just said the silver needle would be useless when such a situation occurred. The intense fear he felt made him shriek uncontrollably.

What he feared wasn't the silver needle but... the other party's zhenqi!

That zhenqi seemed to carry a bizarre strength that expelled souls. Upon contact with it, his soul felt as though a bottle of hard alcohol being set ablaze. The excruciating pain made him feel as though he was being torn apart.

'This is... superior zhenqi?' The elder narrowed his eyes and a thought appeared in his head.

Legend had it that due to the inconceivable purity of superior zhenqi, it possessed the ability to ward off evil. This was also the main reason why despite the incredible means of the soul oracles, they still chose to avoid crossing the paths of master teachers back then.

Just that... superior zhenqi was something that very few people in the Master Teacher Pavilion possessed, inherited only by the descendants of the Kong shi and his students. Why in the world did this fellow possess it as well?

Could this fellow be a descendent of Kong shi's lineage as well?

If that was the case, he was truly an existence to be feared.

He had only barely escaped from the eerie tomb and he just had to meet with this person. Fate sure was cruel!

"No, if this continues on, I'll surely die..." As the number of silver needles on him increased, zhenqi was constantly being transmitted

over via the tip of the needle, threatening to tear him apart. The old man's eyes turned crimson.

Superior zhenqi was the bane of soul oracles. If this were to go on, there would be only one result — he would be incinerated into oblivion.

"I have to find someone to possess..."

Knowing that he would surely crumble if this were to go on, the old man bore with the pain and silently assessed the group before him.

Continuing to remain in this body would only lead to his death. The only plausible course of action at this moment was to possess someone else and find a way in the future to exact vengeance.

But even if he were to successfully possess someone here, he had to make sure that the bizarre young man wouldn't find out. Otherwise, if the other party were to launch another course of attack on him, he would still be doomed.

"Damn it... To force me into possessing another body once more, I'll never forget this grudge!"

Even though he had made up his mind, the old man's heart was dripping blood.

Possession wasn't as easy as it sounded. Every single attempt at

possession would cause immense damage to his soul. Not only would his cultivation fall, his soul would also be significantly wounded as well.

Before possessing the body of this old man, his cultivation was actually at Transcendent Mortal 3-dan primary stage. However, after the possession, his cultivation fell by two cultivation realms to Transcendent Mortal 1-dan primary stage.

In other words, even if he were to succeed, his cultivation would plummet sharply. Perhaps, it might fall by another two cultivation realms once more, falling down to Zhizun.

"It'll have to be one of them..."

Roaring furiously, he looked around and finally found an ideal target.

Of the entire room, the weakest one should be Zhao Feiwu who had never cultivated before. However, she had quite a few treasures on her that made it difficult for even a Transcendent Mortal 3-dan to kill her, lest be said, an incomplete soul like him.

Thus, the only viable targets were Zhao Ya, Sun Qiang, and the others.

Their strengths were at Zongshi realm so even if his cultivation fell once more after possession, he would still be able to suppress them easily.

"He is the one..."

The old man's eyes glowed as he focused his attention on a plump man standing not too far away.

That fellow's cultivation was the lowest of the group, and judging from the dull-witted expression on his face, he seemed to have the lowest wariness of the group. Thus, it should be easiest to possess his body.

"Possession!"

Having chosen a target, the old man immediately acted, knowing that he might lose his chance if he were to dawdle.

Hu!

His soul immediately converted into an intangible smoke which gushed straight toward the plump man.

Putong!

As soon as the soul left, the old man's body immediately froze and fell motionless.

"He's gone..."

Upon seeing the changes, Hall Master Sai cheered in delight.

The lack of reaction meant that there was no soul to control the body at the moment. Most probably, the possessing soul was driven into a corner some method of this Zhang shi, leaving it with no choice but to escape.

When the young man said that he was going to give it a try, Hall Master Sai thought that the possibility would surely be extremely slim. Never in his dreams did he expect that the other party... would succeed so easily.

"Un..."

Then, the unconscious old man suddenly jolted and his eyes slowly opened.

As the possessing soul escaped, the original soul was finally free of its shackles, allowing it to regain control over the body.

"I am itinerant cultivator Luo Zhu. Thank you Zhang shi for saving my life..."

Even though his soul had been suppressed during this period of time, he was still able to see the entire proceedings clearly. He knew that if it wasn't for this young man's persistence, the one to die would have surely been him.

No amount of words could express the gratitude he felt for the other party.

Standing up, he was just about to express his deep gratitude when a sound echoed not too far away.

Ah choo!

A plump man standing a short distance away suddenly felt a gust of chill and shivered.

"This is bad, h-he is being possessed!"

Hearing the sneezing sound, the old man Luo Zhu suddenly remembered something. His eyes narrowed and he immediately exclaimed.

A cultivator's body is tempered by zhenqi, making them invulnerable to common illnesses. Under normal conditions, they would never sneeze.

Back then, when Luo Zhu was being possessed, he also sneezed. Given that the fellow had just left and this plump man immediately sneezed, it was clear that he was trying to take over the body of the latter!

Chapter 473: Nourishment of the Oracle Soul, Leap in Cultivation

To think that this fellow would still try to possess other people despite having been driven off by Zhang Shi, Luo Zhu's face immediately paled.

"Possession?"

Everyone was taken aback.

The soul was an intangible matter. As such, when the possessing soul left the old man's body, no one could tell where it went.

"That's right. Back then, when I was possessed, I also sneezed. That fellow must have surely entered his body..."

Luo Zhu hurriedly pointed toward the plump man.

"Me?"

Naturally, the plump man was Sun Qiang. He was just watching the young master flaunt his immense capability in expelling the soul when the old man pointed a finger toward him. Taken aback, he blinked his eyes innocently and said, "I've been possessed?"

Shouldn't possession result in a tug between the souls? If so, why was he still standing completely fine here?

"That fellow is incomparably cunning. He must have known that Zhang Shi would expel him as soon as he takes control of your body. As such... he chose to hide within your body!" Luo Zhu said.

Having been possessed once before, he'd learned quite a bit about the means of the soul oracles.

"Hide?" Sun Qiang scratched his head.

"That's right. Given the size of a human body, once he decides to conceal his presence, it'll be impossible to find him..." Luo Zhu panicked.

If an intangible object like a soul were to really try to conceal itself, it could be lying practically anywhere within a person's body. Even the most formidable of people wouldn't be able to sense it at all. This way, it would be equivalent to this plump man being equipped with a ticking time bomb. He could possibly be possessed at any moment!

Luo Zhu felt incredibly guilty. It was due to helping him that another person got harmed.

"If that's really the case, the situation is really bad then..."

Hall Master Sai clenched his fists tightly.

Based on the few books that he had browsed through in the past, it would be one thing if the possessing soul were to make a move and forcibly wrestle for control over the body, but if the soul decided to conceal itself and make use of the other party's body to nourish itself as though a leech, that could prove to be troublesome.

Under such circumstances, it was like a virus lying dormant in your body. If the illness hadn't even struck yet, even the best of physicians couldn't possibly treat you!

Zhang Xuan harrumphed and said, "He has decided to hide himself? He sure is bold!"

He didn't expect the other party would dare possess Sun Qiang right after he had expelled him from the old man's body. If he had known about it earlier, he would have sent a torrent of his zhenqi in to destroy his soul instantly.

But still, this problem wasn't too difficult for him. Even 7-star master teachers who were known to specialize in the subject of souls might find it difficult to find a hiding soul but he was different.

With the Library of Heaven's Path in hand, there was no flaw that he couldn't find. A mere hiding soul was nothing before it!

"Sun Qiang, execute a punching routine!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Yes!"

Nodding his head, Sun Qiang's clenched fists shot out, creating a huge gust of wind in the surroundings.

Upon seeing his fist technique, the mouths Jin Conghai, Hall Master Sai, and the others twitched.

To think that a Zongshi realm expert would still be using a Mortal low-tier battle technique... They found it hard to look at those incredibly crude and simple moves.

Even 5-year-old kids were able to execute several of these kinds of battle techniques in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, and yet this fellow was using this... Just the thought of it left them light-headed.

"I've been too busy with my cultivation technique recently that I neglected my battle techniques..."

Sun Qiang could tell what everyone was thinking through their expression and he felt a little embarrassed.

Even though his cultivation had soared during this period of time, he didn't cultivate any new battle techniques to match his newfound strength. He was still stuck with the moves he'd used back in Tianxuan Kingdom.

Naturally, before the experts of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance,

the battle techniques of an unranked kingdom meant nothing at all.

Given the other party's battle technique and his slightly unsteady cultivation, they could easily wipe out dozens of him with just a single finger. Recalling how they were actually scared by this fellow back then in the Xuanyuan Kingdom Poison Hall, Jin Conghai and Gu Mu felt a little awkward.

"Alright!"

Ignoring the expression of the crowd, Zhang Xuan had already managed to find the location where the soul was hiding after a book was compiled in the Library of Heaven's Path. Taking out a silver needle, he immediately pierced it into the spot.

Puhe!

As soon as the silver needle pierced into Sun Qiang's body, a piercing scream echoed from within.

"Y-you... How did you know I was here?"

An agitated ripple of a soul echoed by everyone's ears as though a voice.

Clearly, that fellow who possessed Sun Qiang didn't expect to be found in an instant.

"If you get out now, I will spare your life!"

Zhang Xuan harrumphed as zhenqi rumbled on the tip of the silver needle.

"Get out? Humph! Since you want to destroy me, let's die together then! This fellow is only of Zongshi realm; I might be unable to devour Luo Zhu but devouring this fellow still isn't a problem at all! Even if you were to kill me, what you will be left with is just a corpse!"

The frenzied thoughts of the soul came gushing out.

"Don't harm the innocent..." Luo Zhu anxiously stepped forward.

Even he had nearly failed to hold on while wrestling control with the other party. Given how this plump man was only at Zongshi realm, if the other party were to really attempt a possession, the plump man's soul would surely be completely devoured in an instant.

"It's too late to beg with me now..."

Along with the furious howling of the soul, a powerful aura abruptly engulfed Sun Qiang, striking his consciousness, attempting to devour him altogether.

"Since I'll die anyway, I'll recoup my losses by dragging one or two down with me! After killing him, I'll devour the others as well. How are you going to do about it? Do you think you can be bound down a soul? Haha... Ah? The heck! What is this? AH... SAVE ME..."

Just as the soul was gleefully trying to devour Sun Qiang whole, a frightened scream suddenly echoed.

Following which, everyone felt the aura of the incomparably arrogant and powerful soul shatter apart, as though a balloon placed atop of a pot of sizzling oil.

"This... What happened?"

Luo Zhu was dumbstruck.

Hall Master Sai and the others also widened their eyes in shock.

They had clearly felt the soul's killing intent for themselves previously. Why did it suddenly begin to shout in agony, as though it had seen a ghost?

Did Zhang shi do something?

Everyone hurriedly turned to look at Zhang shi, only to see him dumbfounded, unable to comprehend what was going on.

Turning to look at Sun Qiang once more, his eyes were widened and he shook his hands frantically, "It wasn't me..."

Boom!

Before he could finish his words, the aura of the plump man suddenly surged as though he had eaten some incredibly nutritious tonic. His cultivation realm soared swiftly from Zongshi realm primary stage.

"This is... Nourishment of the Oracle Soul, Leap in Cultivation?"

Luo Zhu and Hall Master Sai's vision suddenly turned dark simultaneously.

"What does that mean?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"While ordinary cultivators cultivate their physical bodies and zhenqi, soul oracles are different in the sense that they cultivate their souls. Their entire cultivation is contained within their soul such that even if they were to possess someone, they could recover back to their original strength swiftly..."

Luo Zhu's lips turned pale, "Now that soul oracle's soul has been destroyed, his entire cultivation has been reduced into nourishment for your servant's body..."

"There's such a matter as well?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

"Indeed. The strength of soul oracles is derived purely from soul energy, and it has no attributes whatsoever. It is compatible with all cultivators, and there is no threat of a conflict at all... If I'm not mistaken, your servant's cultivation will surely increase by leaps and bounds!"

Even until now, Luo Zhu still had a dazed look on his face as he stared at the ignorant Sun Qiang.

What kind of monsters did he meet this time?

A young man who wasn't even twenty yet was able to expel the possessing soul of the soul oracle from him with just a silver needle. His servant turned out to be even more formidable. A soul oracle tried to devour him, only to end up being devoured himself...

"H-he... was able to devour even a soul oracle?"

Gu Mu and Jin Conghai, who was just making light of Sun Qiang a moment ago due to his mediocre battle technique, suddenly turned pale.

Soul oracle was one of the most fearsome occupations in the ancient times. Back then, even the reputation of the poison masters paled to them. There were no experts who wouldn't tremble before them... And yet, this fellow devoured one of their members as though it was nothing at all...

Did you have to be so monstrous?

It was no wonder why you acted so arrogantly at the Poison Hall back then... it seems like you have the capability to back your actions!

"His soul cultivation is currently at an unfathomable level, make sure not to offend him in the future..."

Clenching his fists tightly, Jin Conghai hurriedly instructed his student through telepathy.

Even Luo Zhu, a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle expert, was helpless before the possession of the soul oracle, and he could only be tortured day and night by it.

Yet, this fellow, despite possessing only the cultivation of a Zongshi realm, was able to kill the other party so easily. The strength of his soul must have reached an astounding level.

"If even the servant is so formidable, how powerful must the young master be?"

Thinking so, Jin Conghai turned to look at the young man not too far away in awe.

Since even a mere servant could devour a Transcendent Mortal

realm soul oracle so easily, the young master must be even more formidable than that. It was no wonder why he was adept in so many occupations and his eye of discernment was extraordinary. Perhaps, even though his cultivation seemed to be only Half-Transcension before them, his true strength might be far beyond that.

Just as he was overwhelmed by shock, Sun Qiang's rising aura finally came to a halt.

From Zongshi realm, his cultivation surged swiftly and broke through the bottleneck of a Half-Transcension, thus successfully advancing to Transcendent Mortal 1-dan!

Even though the cultivation of a soul oracle would plummet after a possession... that fellow was devoured even before he had a chance to possess him. In other words, the energy his soul harnessed was still that of a Transcendent Mortal 1-dan.

Having devoured the entire strength of a Transcendent Mortal 1-dan soul, Sun Qiang's cultivation managed to soar above Zhang Xuan's, reaching Transcendent Mortal 1-dan intermediate stage.

However, as this energy came from an external source, Sun Qiang's ability to drive it was still immature. As such, his fighting prowess was still far beneath Zhang Xuan.

"M-my cultivation..."

Sensing the change in his body, Sun Qiang blinked his eyes blankly.

Even until now, he hadn't made sense of the situation yet.

Wasn't that fellow going to devour him?

Did the other party's compassion suddenly work up, and knowing that since he was going die, he allowed himself to be devoured instead?

"It's... the zhenqi that young master left within me!"

Quickly turning his gaze into his body, he soon came to a realization.

Back then, when he went to Xuanyuan Kingdom Poison Hall, fearful for his safety, the young master had left a surge of zhenqi in his body.

However, he ended up not using it in the end, and gradually, he forgot about the matter.

And previously, when the soul tried to devour him, the surge of zhenqi immediately gushed forward to protect him, reducing the assailant into ashes.

In reality, his guess was spot-on. That was indeed the case.

When Zhang Xuan treated Luo Zhu previously, in order to prevent the other party from realizing the uniqueness of the Heaven's Path zhenqi, he only infused a tinge of it in each silver needle. On the other hand, he'd left an entire surge within Sun Qiang's body. That was a difference in quantity of nearly a thousand times... The soul of that soul oracle had already been wounded before so how could it possibly survive that onslaught!

"Thank you, young master..."

Coming to a realization, Sun Qiang was just about to run forward to thank the young master for saving his life when, unbeknownst to him, the calm young master was already standing before Luo Zhu.

"Elder Luo Zhu, is it? May I ask you where did you capture the soul oracle from? Can you get a few more here so that my students can make a breakthrough in their cultivation as well?"

"..." Luo Zhu.

"..." Hall Master Sai.

Chapter 474: The Bizarre Soulless Metal Humanoid (1)

Other people would tremble in fear upon hearing the reputation of the soul oracle, escaping as far as they could. And yet, this fellow actually wanted to obtain a few more so that his students could make a breakthrough?

Everyone felt their lower jaws falling to the floor, and they nearly spurted blood.

If anyone else had said such words, they would definitely doubt if they had gone mad. However, after the incident with Sun Qiang, they knew that the other party was making an earnest request...

Capturing soul oracles to raise one's cultivation...

Big brother, are you treating that fearsome occupation as a nourishment pill?

Wiping the cold sweat off his forehead, Luo Zhu hurriedly explained, "That... Zhang shi, the soul oracles have already died out; it's been that way since ancient times. The reason why this one was still alive is probably because it made use of some secret art to put itself in a dormant state, and I only happened to wake it up unintentionally... There won't be many of such exceptions in the world."

Soul oracles didn't number many, even during the ancient times,

and after the crusade the Master Teacher Pavilion launched against it back then, those who survived could be counted on one's hands. To find even one required immense luck. Did you think that they are like potatoes and carrots on the street, and you can easily fill a sack of them anywhere?

To find a few to augment the cultivation of your students...

You sure know how to dream!

"There aren't many of them? That's truly a pity..."

Zhang Xuan sighed in disappointment.

Seeing how easily Sun Qiang advanced from Zongshi realm to Transcendent Mortal 1-dan as easily as though eating or drinking... If he were to manage to obtain a few of them, he wouldn't have to worry about the cultivation of Zhao Ya and the others. If they could reach Transcendent Mortal realm, they would surely be a great assistance even if they were to reach the Myriad Kingdom Alliance.

Knowing that finding other soul oracles depended heavily on luck, Zhang Xuan decided not to dawdle on the topic. Thus, he turned to Luo Zhu and asked, "Right, about the soul oracle tomb where you found the Soulless Metal Humanoid, can you tell us your story?"

The others were also intrigued by the matter.

Where in the world did this fellow obtain the Soulless Metal Humanoid from, and how in the world did he end up getting possessed by a soul oracle?

"I can only blame my own greed for the matter! I found some possible clues to a soul oracle tomb on an ancient book and thinking that there might be invaluable treasures housed there, I went over... in the end, I did manage to find a few Soulless Metal Humanoids. However, right after I kept one of them, I was possessed by the soul oracle there. Flustered, I immediately escaped..."

Luo Zhu's face turned red in embarrassment.

His experience was rather similar to what the others guessed. He managed to find a soul oracle tomb so he entered it in search of treasure. Yet, he couldn't have expected that a soul oracle was lying in wait for a victim.

After wrestling for many days, he felt that the other party was getting stronger and stronger, and he sensed that he would be doomed if this were to continue on. Thus, he immediately headed over to the auction hall so as to make use of the Appraiser Hall's reputation to gather a larger group of people interested in the soul oracles here in the hope that one of them could cure him of his affliction.

It was fortunate that his luck wasn't bad; he managed to meet Zhang shi.

Otherwise, if it were anyone else, the other party would have surely traded with the soul oracle and destroyed his soul instead.

After hearing the other party's experience, Zhang Xuan asked, "I would like to take a look at the soul oracle tomb and see if I can find their heritage. Can you bring me over?"

The reason why he came to Honghai City was to find the heritage of the soul oracles so as to find a method to wake Lu Chong up. Since there was an opportunity right before him, naturally, he couldn't simply let it go.

"Go to the soul oracle tomb?" Luo Zhu's body trembled in fear.

The previous experience had already left him wary of the location. As such, he couldn't help but feel intense fear from the thought of having to return there.

"If you're worried, you can just tell me the location. I can head there alone."

After hesitating for a moment, Luo Zhu clenched his jaws and said, "That... There's no need for that! Since Zhang shi has saved me, my life belongs to you. If you really intend to head there, I'll lead you over!"

If not for this Zhang shi, his soul would definitely have been eradicated. The huge favor that the other party had shown him

was definitely beyond the value of a mere Soulless Metal Humanoid.

"However... Zhang shi, you have to be careful. That place is treacherous so I think that it would be best for you should make some additional preparations beforehand. Otherwise, I fear that... even with your extraordinary capability, you might still be caught off guard!"

Recalling the various sinister encounters in the tomb, Luo Zhu's heart shuddered.

Zhang Xuan nodded.

To be capable of becoming one of the most feared occupation during the ancient times, soul oracles were anything but simple. Even though the Heaven's Path zhenqi had played a part as to why Sun Qiang could devour the soul oracle so easily, more importantly, that fellow's soul had already declined to a very weak state after innumerable years of existence.

On top of that, he had wrestled control with Luo Zhu for such a long period of time so it wouldn't be wrong to say that he was already wearied out. Thus, it wasn't surprising for him to be defeated so easily.

But it was a different matter venturing into the tomb. It was impossible to know if there were more soul oracles in the tomb, and if so, their means and their strength. As such, this journey was fated to be a difficult one.

After contemplating for a moment, Luo Zhu said, "I will make the preparations for the items required now so let's set off in three days' time!"

Having explored the soul oracle tomb, he had a rough idea on the various objects that soul oracle feared. However, these objects weren't sold on the market so he had to make them himself.

"Alright!" Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

It worked with him as well since the cultivation techniques and battle techniques he'd asked the Appraiser Hall for hadn't arrived yet, and there were various matters he had to attend to here as well. As such, an interval of three days was perfect for him.

"Then... I'll be taking my leave then!"

After chatting for a moment longer and knocking into place the various details regarding the visit to the soul oracle tomb, Luo Zhu clasped his fist and left.

After Luo Zhu left, the room fell silent. With a reddened face, Hall Master Sai asked, "Zhang shi, the bizarre heritage of the ancient soul oracle intrigues me as well so... I wish to take a look as well. Would you mind if I were to accompany you on the journey?"

He failed to be of any use for the purchase of the Soulless Metal Humanoid this time around and yet he was requesting to be

allowed to enjoy the rewards as well. As such, he felt a little embarrassed.

However, the soul oracles had left an astounding legend in history and as an appraiser, he didn't wish to miss a chance to come into contact with it in close distance.

"Zhang shi, I wish to take a look as well..."

Luo Qin hurriedly chirped in too.

Since there were profits to be derived from it, the auction hall wanted to have a stake in it as well. The soul oracles specialized in the study of souls, and one could only render their services if one were to offer a huge amount in tribute to them. Thus, many soul oracles possessed a huge wealth. If he could obtain some of them, the auction hall would surely reap huge profits.

"You wish to take a look as well?" Zhang Xuan frowned for a moment before his eyes abruptly lit up, "Sure! However, I advise you all to prepare sufficient spirit stones beforehand. This way, if there are any treasures there, you can buy it on the spot!"

These two were definitely wealthy people. If there was anything of value in the tomb, he could sell it to them straight and earn some profits.

Currently, gold coins were already useless to him. If he could obtain some more spirit stones, it would surely benefit both the

cultivation progress of him and his students.

"Yes!"

The duo nodded their heads in agreement.

If anyone were to say such words, the both of them would definitely leave the other party searching the floor for their teeth.

But after witnessing Zhang shi's incredible capability that could eradicate even a soul oracle easily... they didn't dare to harbor such thoughts anymore.

To be acknowledged by the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets, discerning that Luo Zhu was possessed immediately... and not to mention, he was a master teacher. Given all of these, it was clear that the other party wasn't someone they could trifle with.

After confirming the matter, Zhang Xuan turned to Hall Master Sai and asked, "Right, may I trouble Hall Master Sai to bring me to your library? I wish to look through the books concerning soul oracles!"

Since he had come to the Appraiser Hall, naturally, he should also pay their library a visit as well. A deep knowledge on appraising and soul oracles might just serve him well in the future.

"That's not a problem at all!"

Hall Master Sai was still fearful as to what ridiculous request Zhang Xuan might ask of him but after hearing that it was just to look through the books, he heaved a sigh of relief and agreed with a smile.

The young man before him possessed appraising capability above that of his. Even without permission, he also possessed the qualifications to enter the library.

"That would be great! Also, may I trouble Hall Master Sai to prepare living quarters for my students and Zhao gongzi so that they may rest?"

Zhang Xuan requested once more.

Right after their long journey from Xuanyuan Kingdom, they immediately visited the Appraiser Hall and attended the auction... At this moment, everyone was already feeling slightly fatigued.

Hall Master Sai nodded his head and backed out. Not too long later, he led the group into a few quiet rooms.

Right after entering one of the room, Zhang Xuan immediately called Zhao Ya and the others to gather by his side.

"The soul oracle tomb is a treacherous place so you have to raise your cultivation as much as possible in these few days so that you all can ensure your own safety."

Even a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan pinnacle, Luo Zhu, had fallen prey to the threats lying within the tomb. His students were only at Zongshi realm at the moment, thus putting them in a very vulnerable position. They had to raise their cultivation quickly or else they would just end up as baggage.

"Feel free to use the spirit stones as you all like. Within three days, all of you must reach Zhizun realm. Otherwise, I won't allow you to come with me!"

Throwing a bunch of spirit stones to each of them, Zhang Xuan instructed.

Previously, due to his lack of wealth, he felt reluctant to even use the spirit stones himself and thus, his students had never really come into contact with them as well. However, after the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets and the auction, Zhang Xuan had more than twenty thousand spirit stones in hand at the moment. With such wealth at hand, he wouldn't be stingy with his own students.

"Yes!" After hearing their teacher's instruction, the group immediately clenched their jaws in determination.

The breakthrough from Zongshi realm to Zhizun was difficult. However, their teacher had already deciphered and analyzed the various cultivation problems they were facing and might face. In addition to that, they were also cultivating the cultivation technique their teacher tailored for them. With so many spirit

stones in their hands now, if they were unable to accomplish such a simple task, they would be too ashamed to address Zhang laoshi as their teacher.

"Alright, go and cultivate!"

After which, Zhang Xuan left the room and following behind Hall Master Sai, he arrived at the Appraiser Hall's library.

Appraising covered a huge range of topics—culture, history, painting, antiques, equipment... The knowledge in the subject was unimaginably vast and so, the Appraiser Hall's library had much more book than the libraries of other occupation.

Upon stepping into it, Zhang Xuan was immediately stunned by the immense size of the library.

Compared to this library, the Tianwu Kingdom's book collection vault and even Xuanyuan Kingdom's Master Teacher Pavilion weren't worth of mentioning.

"Time to begin!"

Zhang Xuan began collecting the books into the Library of Heaven's Path.

Hualalala!

After spending nearly an entire day's time, he managed to duplicate all of the books in the library into the Library of Heaven's Path.

Returning back to his room, Zhang Xuan realized that his body was fatigued and even staying awake was a chore.

After traveling here from Xuanyuan Kingdom, visiting the Appraiser Hall, challenging the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets, and participating in the auction, Zhang Xuan was extremely exhausted. His physical exhaustion didn't amount to much but overuse of his Eye of Insight had depleted his Soul Depth. On top of that, he had collected a vast quantity of books in a short period of time and this had left him completely fatigued.

Thus, he went to sleep and only on the second day's afternoon did he manage to recover.

As long as he didn't hurt his foundation, his Soul Depth would naturally recover with sufficient rest.

"Let's see if I can find any clues from the Soulless Metal Humanoid!"

After waking up and stretching his back, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and a giant metal humanoid appeared in front of him.

Ever since he bought it from the auction, he hadn't gotten a chance to examine it closely yet. Since he was free at the moment,

he decided to give it a good look. Perhaps, he might be able to find some clues that could give him a deeper understanding of the soul oracles.

The gold humanoid lay there quietly in front of Zhang Xuan, no different from a lifeless puppet. After observing it for a moment, Zhang Xuan was unable to discern anything peculiar about it. Thus, he placed his finger on the puppet.

"Flaws!"

Hu!

A book appeared in his mind.

Flipping it open, Zhang Xuan began reading through his contents and slowly, his eyebrows knitted together. A bizarre expression appeared on his face.

"Th-this... How is this possible?"

Chapter 475: The Bizarre Soulless Metal Humanoid (2)

A detailed introduction on the metal humanoid was written in the book.

"Grade-1 Soulless Metal Humanoid, a unique puppet crafted by soul oracles. It possesses its own consciousness and one can control it via fusing their soul into it. There's a spirit stone formation placed within its body which allows for its strength to be enhanced even without cultivating. If several metal humanoids were to be controlled simultaneously, it would form an incredible fighting prowess. Flaws: ..."

Possesses its own consciousness?

What does that mean?

Could it be that this fellow was still alive? Otherwise... How could it possibly possess its own consciousness?

Zhang Xuan continued reading on.

"... Flaw 4, its soul has been willingly stripped from its body, leaving behind only a sliver of inextinguishable flame of life within its body. Thus, it cannot regain sanity. Flaw 5..."

"Could it be that..." Suddenly recalling something, Zhang Xuan's

face darkened.

Legend had it that the Soulless Metal Humanoids were crafted using living human beings. Initially, Zhang Xuan still held some doubts toward this matter as legends tended to be exaggerated. However, from the looks of it, it seemed like it was true.

The main reason why an inextinguishable flame of life within the body was probably prevent the body from rotting. In essence, the metal humanoid was no different from a person in a vegetative state. While it was a corpse on the surface, its body still retained equal flexibility as it did when it was still alive.

A person's body was intricately linked to the soul. Once a soul was lost, a person would die and their soul would gradually decay. But if that were to happen, how could one forge the metal humanoids?

Putting everything aside, it would take some time to coat the entire body with metal. If body were to be completely dead, it would probably decay before one could succeed in the process.

Clenching his fists tightly, Zhang Xuan was angered by the cruelty of soul oracle when he suddenly noticed something and shook his head, "That isn't it. Their souls were stripped from them with their consent. Could it be that these people had done so willingly?"

It was written in the book from the Library of Heaven's Path that these people had allowed for their own souls to be extracted.

In other words, the soul oracles didn't force this fate on them. The original host of the metal humanoids had consented to the matter themselves. That was also why an inextinguishable flame of life could be left behind. Otherwise, if they were to struggle, there was an extremely high chance that the entire soul would be destroyed.

If that were to happen, it would be impossible to preserve the body, lest to say, forge a metal humanoid.

After thinking for a moment, Zhang Xuan deduced most of the matter. "Legend had it that some influential powers groomed teams of loyal death soldiers who would lay down their lives for their masters. The original host of this metal humanoid was probably the same as well. Groomed by the soul oracles, the purpose of their lives was to turn into metal humanoids and serve them for all eternity..."

Since most large powers chose to groom death soldiers, there was no reason why the soul oracles wouldn't. Besides, this type of occupation specialized in subject of souls. Brainwashing a cultivator to have them accept having their souls taken away from them was also a possibility.

Fearsome!

Sinister!

To be able to make someone willingly allow himself to be turned

into a puppet, soul oracles were indeed fearsome.

He was just considering whether he should capture a few of them to devour them so as to raise his cultivation. However, after learning about their callous means, he shuddered... It was best for him not to take the risk!

Continuing on, he soon finished browsing through the books.

There wasn't anything much noteworthy in the latter part of the content. Most of them were just on the flaws of the Soulless Metal Humanoid and the method to drive them.

"It's a pity that I can't use it..."

After reading through the contents, Zhang Xuan shook his head in disappointment.

The soul oracles specialized in the study of souls, and their souls were capable of leaving their body to control the puppet. However, Zhang Xuan wasn't capable of doing so.

Throughout his cultivation, he had never come into contact with any books detailing the cultivation of one's soul. In other words... even though he had reached Half-Transcension already, his soul was still firmly integrated in his body. He couldn't operate the two of them separately.

This was just like driving a car. In order to drive a car, one had to

get onto the driver's seat first. If one's soul couldn't leave one's body, one wouldn't be able to enter the metal humanoid to drive it.

In truth, Zhang Xuan had been thinking that if he could control it, it would be equivalent to gaining a Transcendent Mortal realm death soldier. However, from the looks of it now, it seemed like it was nothing more than a dream.

His soul was still locked in his physical body, unable to leave its restraints. In other words... this puppet was completely useless to him now!

Admittedly, if he were to meet with danger, he could still use it as a shield.

Cough, cough.

After going through so much trouble, he only ended up buying a shield... Just the thought of it left him faint-headed.

"Keep!"

After taking another look, Zhang Xuan verified that there was no important information to be derived from the Soulless Metal Humanoid and thus, he put it away within his storage ring. Then, flicking his wrist, a round ball appeared on his palm.

It was the Celestial Designer Mechanical Container that Elder Chen had used to repay his debt.

"There's a flaw here, here, and here as well..."

Touching the round lead-like object, Zhang Xuan infused his zhenqi into the various location of the flaws detailed in the Library of Heaven's Path.

There was only a total of seventeen flaws so it didn't take him too long to finish the job.

Kacha!

A mechanical sound suddenly echoed from the sphere in his hand. It sounded as though something was being unlocked.

"This..."

Zhang Xuan leaped in shock.

From the outer appearance, the artifact was no different from a lead ball. There wasn't the slightest gap or slit on it, causing him to suspect that it was just an ordinary ball of metal.

He didn't expect that it could be opened.

"How exquisite..."

Lowering his head to take a look, Zhang Xuan couldn't help but compliment, "Could it be that this Celestial Designer Institute is something similar to the Beast Hall and Apothecary Guild, that it is somewhere celestial designers gather?"

Having duplicated the books throughout the entire Appraiser Hall, even though he hadn't assimilated all of the knowledge yet, he'd learned of another incredible occupation — Celestial Designer!

This occupation didn't possess too much fighting prowess. Rather, the field they specialized in was machinery, and they belonged to the Lower Nine Paths.

It was said that the most elusive secret weapon, the most complicated puppet, and the toughest armor all came from their design. Even though blacksmiths were capable of forging powerful equipment and tools as well, if one wanted to bring out a greater prowess from these equipment and tools, one had to find a celestial designer for a blueprint.

Most top-notch experts would choose to hire both a celestial designer and a blacksmith simultaneously when they wanted to craft their personal weapon. The tools designed by celestial designers tended to contain innumerable tricks within them, making it difficult for one to guard against such tools.

Taking Zheng Yang's spear for example, he had to fix the spear himself manually each time he wanted to wield it, making it an exceptionally troublesome process. However, if a blacksmith were to craft something based on the design of a celestial designer, it could end up being an object similar to a chopstick that could

extend to more than a zhang long (3.33m) upon a light click.

Another example was this Celestial Designer Mechanical Container. The flaws recorded in the Library of Heaven's Path were probably the weaker points at which it was linked at. Only when exerting pressure precisely at these points could one open it properly.

Otherwise, no matter how powerful one was, one could do nothing about it. And if one were to use excessive strength, one might end up ruining the object contained within it as well.

"What kind of valuable object was stored in this container?"

Curious, Zhang Xuan pried the Celestial Designer Mechanical Container open.

The moment he came into contact with this object, the Library of Heaven's Path immediately gave him the evaluation saying that 'Celestial Designer Mechanical Container, forged by the Celestial Designer Institute with complex mechanical systems. It can't be opened without knowing the specific sequences required to do so. It's likely that some important treasure is hidden within it!'

Since it was an artifact stored in such an exquisitely-made container, it was unlikely for it to be anything ordinary.

Opening the box, a thin layer of beastskin was placed within it. Zhang Xuan couldn't tell what kind of beast the fabric was made of

but one thing that was certain was that it was extraordinarily durable. It was clear that it had been kept for innumerable years already but yet it remained completely undamaged.

He carefully lifted it up.

"Red Dust Heaven Ascending Steps? What's this?"

Five large words 'Red Dust Heaven Ascending Steps' were written on the very top of the beastskin.

Reading on, a poem appeared in Zhang Xuan's sight.

"A cloud of red dust for three thousand li, treading to the clear skies with a smile!"

Beyond the poem detailed the origin of the beastskin.

"The Red Dust Heaven Ascending Steps originates from Sage Zhong, one of Kong shi's students. On the day which he successfully mastered the technique, shouldering a massive mountain, with a single step, he appeared three thousand li away and soared into the vast skies. With the grace from Sage Zhong, our lineage is bestowed with the first scroll of Heaven Ascending Steps to pass on to our descendants so I hope that you can treasure this scroll. In order to prevent it from landing into the hands of outsiders, it's placed within a Celestial Designer Mechanical Container so that no one except for those who carry our bloodline are capable of opening it..."

"It's a movement technique?"

Coming to a realization, Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up.

Given that this was the creation of one of Kong shi's students, the value of the battle technique was unimaginable.

It was no wonder why it was placed within a Celestial Designer Mechanical Container.

Under normal circumstances, this container could only be opened with a unique method that only those who bear the bloodline of their lineage knew of. Naturally, Zhang Xuan had no idea what that method was.

The only reason why he could open it was due to him finding the flaws of the object through the Library of Heaven's Path.

It was just like a typical security system in his previous life. One could unlock it if one knew the password but even if one were to forget it, one could still ask for an administrator to help them unlock it.

That was the privilege that Zhang Xuan was using now.

The Library of Heaven's Path was able to see through the very core of the container, allowing Zhang Xuan to strike accurately at

its fundamental flaws. Thus, no matter how tightly-sealed or intricate the container was, it didn't make a difference to him.

"I wonder if there are any flaws in the battle technique left behind by Kong shi's student!"

Holding the secret manual, Zhang Xuan muttered 'flaws'.

It had already become a habit of his to check if there were any flaws in a battle technique.

Since this skill was created by Kong shi's student, it must be of an unimaginable tier... However, no matter how powerful a skill was, it was impossible for it to be completely flawless.

Hu!

A book appeared in Zhang Xuan's mind. He hurriedly flipped it open to take a look.

"Only 42 flaws?"

Swiftly flipping through the book, Zhang Xuan was astonished.

As expected of a movement technique created by Kong shi's student, it was indeed a fearsome existence. Having only 42 flaws in a high-tier technique was truly a formidable accomplishment.

In the battle techniques that Zhang Xuan had flipped through previously, there were at least several hundred flaws. This was the reason why every single battle technique required more than a thousand books to form the flawless Heaven's Path battle techniques.

Yet, this battle technique only had 42 flaws. This clearly reflected how formidable a battle technique it was. If knowledge of it were to be leaked out, it would surely cause massive bloodshed.

"But there are still so many flaws in there, how am I supposed to learn it..."

It was one thing if Zhang Xuan didn't know that there were any flaws in there, but now that he knew, his face immediately turned bitter.

No matter how delicious a fruit is, once you know that there are worms within, it will be impossible to whet your appetite.

Zhang Xuan was too used to his cultivation techniques and battle techniques being flawless. Knowing that there were more than forty flaws in the technique, even though he knew that it was a powerful skill, he was still unable to get past this and learn it.

"Right, Heaven's Path Movement Art is also a type of movement art. Perhaps I might be able to fuse them together!"

Heaven's Path Movement Art was a technique created by

compiling innumerable movement technique secret manuals together. Even though it only consisted of the bare basics, it was the fundamentals to the very essence of the world. Perhaps, the both of them could be fused together to make up for the flaws of the Heaven Ascending Steps.

"Compile!"

Placing the two books together, Zhang Xuan willed.

Hu!

A new book appeared.

Zhang Xuan immediately flipped through it.

"Three flaws? Great! Even though there are still three left, it's still an acceptable number..."

Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up.

Even though there were still three flaws left, there wasn't any major mistakes to it anymore, making it worthwhile to learn. At the very most, he would just have to collect more movement technique secret manuals and try to fuse them together with the Heaven Ascending Steps.

Without any hesitation, Zhang Xuan began browsing through the

contents.

With a single look, his eyes narrowed and his lips went pale.

"[Red Dust](#) Heaven Ascending Steps — Parallel Heaven Scroll.
Could this be... flight?"

It's a reference to the red cloud of dust that rises to the air along with the galloping of the horses inside a bustling city. It usually refers to a life centered around material possessions and so, the skill actually has the deeper meaning of 'reaching enlightenment' as you step away from the facades of life.

Chapter 476: Song Chao Wishes to Guide Zhang Xuan (1)

Parallel heaven, in other words, to stand on equal footing with the heavens.

Ordinary cultivators, even Transcendent Mortal experts, were incapable of flight. They still had to rely on aerial savage beasts to reach the skies. Yet, this cultivation technique claimed to be able to parallel the heavens. Didn't this mean that one would be capable of flight after learning the battle technique?

Flight had always been one of the greatest dreams of humans. Be it his previous life or his current one, Zhang Xuan had always possessed a yearning to soar through the skies. Thus, upon seeing the content, he couldn't help but feel agitated.

"A smile in the red dust, soaring alongside the wind. Parallel Heaven Scroll, upon mastery, grants one the ability of soaring in the skies, standing alongside the heavens..."

Zhang Xuan swiftly continued reading on.

"Incredible..."

Reading the contents within carefully, Zhang Xuan suddenly felt as though a new perspective to his understanding of cultivation had been unlocked.

Flight was something that even Transcendent Mortal 9-dan experts were incapable of. Legend had it that only upon ascending beyond the Transcendent Mortal realm would one be capable of the feat. Yet, it was detailed here that as long as one cultivated properly, a Transcendent Mortal 1-dan, or perhaps even a Half-Transcension like him, would be able to step into the skies!

"Transcendent Mortal cultivators strive to comprehend the essence of the world, thus granting them a certain level of control over their environment. By gathering this energy and molding it, one would be able to step on thin air and ascend to the skies!"

This was the main concept behind the scroll.

If it were any other Half-Transcension cultivator, they would definitely be unable to comprehend such a deep cultivation technique. However, Zhang Xuan was different. Given that most of the flaws had been resolved by the Library of Heaven's Path and the deep knowledge Zhang Xuan contained in his head, even though there were some intricacies here and there, they weren't sufficient to impede his progress.

"When one falls into the water, one can ascend upward by stepping against the water. Even though water is lacking in solidity, it is still able to make one float... and air is capable of the same feat as well! As long as one finds the correct method to driving the energy of the world, stepping against the air to float one isn't a difficult task at all. This is also what it means to mold energy with one's cultivation..."

After an unknown period of time, Zhang Xuan breathed out a

mouthful of turbid air and his eyes lit up.

"Incredible! To think that there would be such a formidable battle technique in the world!"

As expected of Kong shi's student, Sage Zhong's comprehension of the heavens had reached an unthinkable level.

All of the battle techniques and cultivation technique he had seen before paled far too much before it. There was no basis of comparison at all.

The scroll had opened an entirely new world before him, granting him a much deeper understanding of battle techniques and cultivation techniques.

"It's a pity that this is only the first scroll. I wonder how profound the latter ones might be!"

Zhang Xuan sighed in lamentation.

After he finished browsing through it, he came to a realization. This Red Dust Heaven Ascending Steps was only an introduction formula. It was only suited for Transcendent Mortal cultivators, and after going beyond that realm, it would become redundant.

That was because beyond Transcendent Mortal, one would gain the capability of flight. Even if one had mastered the Red Dust Heaven Ascending Steps, at best, it would only augment one's

flight speed by a small bit.

"I should give it a try..."

After resting for a moment, Zhang Xuan reorganized the Parallel Heaven Scroll before sitting down to drive his zhenqi according to the formula detailed in the scroll.

Even though he was still at Half-Transcension only, he already possessed a certain level of control over his surroundings. At this very moment, all of his attention and energy throughout his body was focused at a single point.

Hu!

Zhang Xuan's meditating body gradually lifted up, as though a balloon rising up from the bottom of the water.

Putong!

But barely after three breaths, he immediately fell down and began panting heavily.

"What fearsome expenditure..."

Zhang Xuan's face turned pale.

Just to hold himself in the air for three breaths, he had sapped his zhenqi dry. This Red Dust Heaven Ascending Steps sounded incredible, and being capable of flying in the air was also extremely incredible, but the zhenqi expenditure was simply way too exaggerated!

If he could only sustain it for such a short period of time, he would come falling down to earth before he could do anything in the air.

"Looks like... this is still a rather useless battle technique for me at the moment..."

Zhang Xuan was disappointed.

He thought that he would be able to soar into the heavens right after mastering it but from the looks of it... he was expecting way too much!

A flight that could only be sustained for three seconds was futile. No matter how high he could soar, after three seconds, he would come crashing back to earth due to lack of zhenqi.

What in the world was this? He'd learned such a formidable battle technique... But in the end, it was completely useless; he could reach even greater heights just by jumping. On top of that, he would come crashing down right after three seconds... At this very moment, Zhang Xuan made up his mind not to use this technique in public so as to not embarrass himself.

Grabbing a few spirit stones, Zhang Xuan frenziedly absorbed the spiritual energy within them; it took him an hour before he fully recovered.

In the end, the main problem was that his cultivation was too low, resulting in him possessing insufficient zhenqi to upkeep with his expenditure.

If he could bring his cultivation realm up a few notches, it might become much easier for him to execute the technique.

After studying the technique for a moment longer, Zhang Xuan evaluated that he wasn't suited to using the battle technique at the moment so he stretched his back and walked out.

"Young master, there's a fellow outside insisting on meeting you. I've already chased him away three times but he still shows up every single day... Should I inform Elder Jin so that he can toss the other party out?"

Right after walking out, Sun Qiang hurriedly walked up and spoke with an annoyed expression on his face.

"Someone is insisting on meeting me?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He didn't know anyone here so why would anyone come here to look for him?

"I don't know who he is either. I've asked him several times but he simply refuses to speak. Just looking at his arrogant face makes me feel so infuriated..." Sun Qiang harrumphed.

"Arrogant?" Zhang Xuan felt even more perplexed.

There was someone in the world who could be more arrogant than this Big Brother Qiang here?

It was truly incredible that someone could annoy him to such a point.

"Is that person still around?" Intrigued, Zhang Xuan asked.

"Yes!"

"Lead me to him!" Zhang Xuan waved his hands.

"Un. He's at the lounge!" Sun Qiang pointed.

The living quarters that Hall Master Sai assigned them was an independent residence with seven to eight bedrooms and an average-sized lounge.

Stepping into the lounge, Zhang Xuan saw a young man sitting on one of the seats. An elder stood behind the young man, and the aura shrouding him was vague and barely discernible, revealing his extraordinary cultivation.

It was the young man and the elder of Suite 23.

...

Seated in the lounge, Song Chao felt a little frustrated.

That day, when the item he wanted was intercepted by Suite 1, he had felt extremely displeased. Thus, he secretly had his men look into the matter and he finally managed to track the other party down.

The one who was with Hall Master Sai then was a master teacher named Zhang Xuan. As for his specific identity, there wasn't sufficient information to make any conclusion.

Upon hearing that the other party was a master teacher, Song Chao immediately heaved a sigh of relief.

If the other party was of any other identity, he wouldn't be in a good position to do anything. But for master teacher... As a 4-star master teacher, he definitely ranked within the top in Myriad Kingdom Alliance. He didn't think that a fellow who wasn't even twenty yet could be a match for him.

Master teachers viewed hierarchy very strictly. Since the other party's ranking was lower than him, this matter would be easy to solve.

Thus, he excitedly came knocking on the other party's door but in the end, all three trips of his ended in futile...

And more importantly, that butler of his even viewed him as a scammer and tried to chase him out... If not in consideration of his identity, he would have long slapped the other party to death.

"Young master, do you think that... he'll sell it to us?"

Seeing the frustration in the young master's eyes, the elder couldn't help but ask.

The reason why they made the long journey here was due to hearing rumors regarding the Soulless Metal Humanoid. Yet, the young master ended up being outbid on the auction. Thus, he looked into the background of the buyer and came knocking in hopes of being able to buy it down... But given how the other party bought it at an exorbitant price, why would he be willing to sell it to them?

"Humph, he doesn't have a choice in the matter! As long as he's a master teacher, I have a way to make him sell it to me!" Grabbing the armrest of the chair, Song Chao's face turned frosty.

"Does young master have an idea in mind?" The elder's eyes lit up.

"Of course. As a 4-star master teacher, I'll definitely be able to easily see the flaws in his cultivation. As long as I offer his

guidance, he'll definitely hand it over obediently..."

Song Chao's mouth curled up.

It was impossible for a cultivator to possess no flaws with his cultivation at all. As a 4-star master teacher, he was more than confident of guiding a small figure who wasn't even twenty yet on his cultivation.

The moment he helps the other party achieve a breakthrough, the other party would surely be filled with gratitude for him. Putting aside the Soulless Metal Humanoid, it was even possible for the other party to kowtow on the spot and beg him to take him in as his student.

"That's true..."

After a moment of silence, the elder slowly nodded his head in agreement.

Master teachers did possess the capability and charisma to do so. The reason why he willingly followed the young master wasn't just because of the debt of gratitude he owed to the young master's clan; more importantly, it was because of this.

Following behind a master teacher was an opportunity in itself. Listening more to the words of a master teacher could help one to avoid straying on the wrong path on one's cultivation, allowing one's cultivation to rise swiftly.

"Young master, they are the ones who wish to meet you!"

Just as the elder was wondering whether they would be able to meet Zhang Shi today, the butler's sound echoed and two men walked into the lounge.

The one walking in front didn't look too old, seemingly below twenty. From the looks of it, he must be that legendary Zhang Xuan.

"You're looking for me?"

Upon stepping into the lounge, Zhang Xuan's confusion deepened. He had never met these two before. What business could they have with him?

"That's right. I am 4-star Master Teacher Song Chao!" Song Chao stood up and gestured grandly.

"4-star master teacher?" Zhang Xuan froze for a moment before quickly clasping his fist. "Oh, Zhang Xuan pays respect to Song Shi!"

He didn't think that this fellow who didn't seem as though he was thirty yet would actually be a 4-star master teacher. As expected of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, it was indeed filled with talents.

"Un!" Seeing that the other party's attitude was not bad, Song Chao nodded his head in satisfaction. He was just about to bring out the disposition of an elder and guide the other party when a set of footsteps sounded outside.

"Zhang shi, you're finally out! All of the items you asked for have already been gathered..."

Hall Master Sai walked in.

Upon walking into the room, Hall Master Sai saw Song Chao and clasped his fist, "Sai Xiaoyu pays respect to Song shi!"

Hall Master Sai had met Song Chao over the past two days, while the latter was trying to look into Zhang shi's affairs.

After greeting the latter, Hall Master Sai immediately turned his attention to Zhang Xuan and delightfully passed a storage ring over to him with a fawning look.

"You've gathered everything? So fast?"

Didn't you say that it'll take three days? It has only been slightly more than two days but you're already done?

Taking the storage ring, Zhang Xuan swept through the contents within with his mind and realized that it was filled entirely with cultivation technique and battle technique manuals. In total, they added up to more than ten thousand books.

There were cultivation technique manuals on Transcendent Mortal 1-dan, 2-dan, and 3-dan.

But just like what Hall Master Sai said before, the quantity of the books reduced as the level of the cultivation technique manuals went up.

But even so, it was already a huge harvest.

From the looks of it, he should be able to compile a perfect Transcendent Mortal 1-dan Prolonged Longevity realm cultivation technique.

"You did well!"

Smiling slightly, Zhang Xuan nodded his head in commendation.

"Since I've already given you my word, it's only right for me to do it to the best of my abilities..."

Hall Master Sai replied in delight after receiving the commendation. After which, with a flick of his wrist, he took out an emblem and said, "Zhang shi, I've reported the matter regarding how you passed the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets to the headquarters, and this is the 5-star appraiser emblem that they have bestowed to you..."

"5-star emblem?" Taking the emblem from the other party's hand, as expected, Zhang Xuan saw five bright stars on the surface of the emblem.

This almost felt like a dream. To think that he would become a 5-star appraiser just by clearing the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblet.

Wasn't the appraiser examination a little too easy?

Chapter 477: Song Chao Wishes to Guide Zhang Xuan (2)

Translator: StarveCleric Editor: StarveCleric

"The Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblet is a test for 5-star appraisers, and it's of extreme difficulty. Under usual circumstances, one would have passed the test just by successfully appraising a single object. Yet, you managed to appraise three of them and even to the extent of... having the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblet operation table acknowledge you as its owner. If you can't even qualify as a 5-star appraiser with that..."

Seeing through Zhang Xuan's thoughts, Hall Master Sai smiled bitterly.

Honestly speaking, in his view, even the rank of a 5-star appraiser seemed to be an understatement of the other party's ability.

Just through his appraisal, he could make those invaluable artifacts acknowledge him as their master. That as a skill that only appraisers of 6-star and above possessed.

But of course, the Honghai City Appraiser Hall wasn't of sufficient rank to apply for a 6-star emblem.

"Does appraiser have no demand on one's cultivation?" Zhang Xuan couldn't help but ask.

Master teacher, apothecary, beast tamer, physician... All of these Upper Nine Paths occupations were very demanding on one's cultivation. Without a sufficiently high cultivation realm, no matter how capable one was in the occupation, one would still be unable to progress through the ranks.

It was just like how even though Zhang Xuan caused such a huge uproar in Tianwu Kingdom Physician Guild back then, the Myriad Kingdom Alliance Physician Guild was only able to grant him the position of an elder and his ranking was still pending to date.

To be suddenly given the ranking of a 5-star appraiser just like that, wasn't it making a little too light of the occupation?

"The main responsibility of an appraiser is to appraise artifacts. As such, there isn't any specific requirement to one's cultivation. In truth, most Middle Nine Paths and Lower Nine Paths occupations work in the same way as well. Only the occupations of the Upper Nine Paths have such rigorous restrictions on one's cultivation!" Hall Master Sai explained.

Zhang Xuan nodded his head.

While the duo was chatting so happily, Song Chao's vision was turning dark and he nearly fainted from anger.

No matter what, he was a 4-star master teacher, a pinnacle existence within the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. Putting aside how that Zhang Shi ignored him right after greeting him... To think

that Hall Master Sai would do the same as well! Furthermore, for the two of them to be chatting so happily in his presence, disregarding his existence...

Wasn't this blatant disregard for him?

Previously, he thought that the butler must have a screw loose to have tried to attempt to chase him out. But now, from the looks of it... it was probably the owner's influence!

To think that the two of you would disregard a 4-star master teacher and chat so happily together like that, do you all not even know basic courtesy...

"Hmph!" Unable to hold it in anymore, Song Chao flung his sleeves and tilted his face upward. Placing his hands behind his back, he spoke furiously, "Zhang shi and Hall Master Sai, a 4-star master teacher is in your presence. Is this how you treat your guests..."

But before he could finish his words, the elder beside him said awkwardly, "Young master, they have already left..."

"Left?"

Taken aback, Song Chao quickly turned his head around, only to see Zhang Xuan and Hall Master Sai walking out of the room with a smile on their faces.

Having obtained the cultivation technique and battle technique manuals he had been waiting for, Zhang Xuan was eager to compile the Heaven's Path Divine Art to make the breakthrough to Transcendent Mortal 1-dan. Thus, how could he possibly be willing to stay here a single moment longer?

"You..."

Song Chao was on the verge of spewing blood.

It was one thing to disregard his presence, but to leave without saying a word... It was clear that they had forgotten about him, a 4-star master teacher! Damn it!

Were they simply too brave or was he really that insignificant?

"Hold it right there..."

Bellowing furiously, his figure blurred and as though an apparition, he flitted a distance of several dozen meters in an instant and blocked the path of the duo.

His cultivation was immediately revealed as soon as he used his cultivation technique.

Transcendent Mortal 3-dan Yin-Yang realm primary stage!

"Zhang shi, do you know that there is a fatal flaw with your

cultivation technique, and your life is hanging by a thread?"

Knowing that violence should be the last option, Song Chao suppressed his anger and donned the disposition befitting of an expert.

"My cultivation technique?"

The cultivation technique Zhang Xuan practiced was derived from the Library of Heaven's Path so how could there possibly be a flaw in it?

But a moment later, Zhang Xuan immediately comprehended the situation.

Flaws in one's cultivation technique were an unavoidable problem for all cultivators. The other party was probably trying to use words to hoodwink him before using some method to find a flaw in his cultivation technique so as to offer him some pointer.

There were some master teachers who used this method to have the person they had set their eyes on to have him acknowledge them as his teacher.

In fact, Zhang Xuan had done so himself as well. Back then, Wang Ying fell for the exact same trick.

"That's right. If you wish to overcome your current realm, I can lend you my assistance. If so, you can avoid many unwanted

hassles!"

Seeing that Zhang Xuan was hooked, Song Chao felt gleeful. With an earnest expression on his face, he was just about to randomly spout some common problems in cultivation so further enhance his credibility when the young man before him stared at him with a frown.

"Song shi, do you feel an aching pain in your [Huihai Acupoint] and frailty in your [Baichi Acupoint] that results in you being unable to focus your attention?"

"I'm talking about your problems so you should..." Song Chao was just about to reprimand the other party when he suddenly realized something and his body froze. "How do you know about it?"

Recently, during his cultivation, he found that he was unable to gather zhenqi in his Huihai acupoint, and whenever he did so, he would experience a sharp pain as though someone was tearing it apart. His Baichi acupoint also felt a little feeble, thus making it hard for him to concentrate.

This was precisely the reason why he took this trip out, unintentionally heard news regarding the Soulless Metal Humanoid, and came over here. Otherwise, as a talented 4-star master teacher, how could he have the spare effort to be wandering around?

"Not only so, when you cultivate, do you feel a numbness in your

left thigh and your right leg often convulses?"

Zhang Xuan continued.

"I..." Song Chao's face slowly turned pale.

That was spot-on.

"If I'm not mistaken, your cultivation technique should be [Supreme Art of Heaven's Frost]. There's no mistake with your cultivation method and your cultivation technique, at Spirit intermediate-tier, is rather powerful as well. However, it's a pity that... three months ago, in an attempt to forcibly raise your cultivation, an error occurred which resulted in your meridians being blocked by the frost element of your cultivation technique. The direct result of that is numbness in your left thigh, convulse of your right leg, frailty in the Baichi acupoint, and sharp pain in the Huihai acupoint!"

Zhang Xuan analyzed calmly.

This fellow had just executed his battle technique to block their way, and this had caused a corresponding book to be compiled within the Library of Heaven's Path.

"Then... is there a way to resolve this problem?"

Song Chao asked anxiously.

The other party had described his current physical condition accurately. However, there wasn't a clear solution for the blockage of his acupoints. Even his teacher, a half 5-star master teacher, was incapable of solving the problem so he could only let it recover gradually with time.

Thus, Song Chao had given up all hope and decided to simply wait it out. Yet, this young man here had identified all of his symptoms clearly... How in the world did he manage to do it?

"Five thousand spirit stones. I'll help you solve your problem and achieve a breakthrough!" Zhang Xuan spoke impassively.

"Five thousand?" Song Chao hesitated.

"If I'm not mistaken, you should have consulted a few other people on your problem but they are all helpless before it. If you don't use my method, you'll need at least an entire year to recover. I'm sure you know the consequences of not cultivating for an entire year!" Zhang Xuan was in no hurry at all.

"Alright, here is the spirit stones. I beseech Zhang shi for your guidance!" Soon, Song Chao gritted his teeth and replied.

With a flick of his wrist, a bunch of spirit stones fell to the floor. In an instant, dense spiritual energy gushed into the air.

"Un!" Zhang Xuan nodded his head in satisfaction. He swiftly

kept the spirit stones in his storage ring before saying, "The cure is extremely simple. You just have to drive your zhenqi along this meridian..."

"To offer pointers to even 4-star master teachers? Exactly how highly ranked is this Zhang shi..."

Hall Master Sai widened his eyes in shock.

He already knew that Zhang shi was extraordinary but still, he didn't expect it to such a degree.

This Song Chao was a 4-star master teacher, and yet, his cultivation errors could still be pointed in an instant. On top of that, Zhang Xuan was able to solve the problem that had plagued the former for such a long period of time! Through this, it could be deduced that Zhang Xuan's capability had reached an astounding level.

The body of the elder in the lounge froze, and his hyperventilation nearly acted up.

The young master had gone over to offer guidance to the other party in hopes of winning the other party's gratitude and earn the Soulless Metal Humanoid. Yet, in the blink of an eye, he became the one being guided instead? And on top of that, to be paying money as well...

What was with this sudden twist?

Even though he had witnessed the sight with his own eyes, he still felt as though he was going mad.

"... Alright, just cultivate using the method I just told you and your affliction will definitely be solved within three days!"

While the duo was shocked speechless, Zhang Xuan finished his guidance.

"Thank your Zhang shi for your guidance..."

After memorizing the method the other party spoke of, Song Chao felt awed. He subconsciously clasped his fist in gratitude.

"Un!"

Replying with a nod, Zhang Xuan continued walking on.

Any other master teacher would definitely find it hard to determine the cause of Song Chao's affliction. However, once the cause was determined, solving it became much easier. Given how the other party was a 4-star master teacher, he should be more than capable to tell whether what Zhang Xuan said was true or not.

"Young master... Aren't you going to ask for the Soulless Metal Humanoid from him? Why did you end up paying him instead..."

After Zhang Xuan left, the elder hurriedly walked up.

"Ah?"

Song Chao was suddenly jolted from his trance.

For some reason, when he was listening to the other party's analysis and guidance previously, he unknowingly fell into a state of trance.

"This is... Impartation of Heaven's Will? He used Impartation of Heaven's Will on me? And I actually fell for it?"

Upon realizing something, Song Chao's mouth twitched and he nearly fainted on the spot.

Even though the other party's analysis and guidance were spot-on, logically speaking, he shouldn't have obeyed every single word the other party said, going to the extent of even paying money. The only logical explanation for it was that... the other party had used Impartation of Heaven's Will on him!

That was an ability unique to master teachers. As long as one's words were true, one would be able to stimulate the zhenqi within the bodies of others' and induce unconditional trust within others, making others follow one's orders obediently.

His original intention was to offer guidance to the other party and yet, he ended up falling for the other party's Impartation of

Heaven's Will instead... Song Chao felt as though he was going insane.

However, as a 4-star master teacher, Song Chao's Soul Depth had reached 12.0. For the other party to be able to induce unconditional trust in him through the Impartation of Heaven's Will, didn't that mean that the other party's Soul Depth was higher than his?

Are you for real?

"On top of that, just Impartation of Heaven's Will by itself is insufficient... More importantly, one has to have the acknowledgement of the predecessors! Those who have been acknowledged of the predecessors of the Master Teacher Pavilion will possess a disposition that induces deference in others... Could it be that this fellow had earned the acknowledgement of even more predecessors than me?"

Song Chao's fist clenched tightly together once more.

Master teachers were exceptionally sensitive to this kind of disposition, thus making it much easier for them to listen to the words of acknowledged master teachers.

This was also why it was said that even without the master teacher emblem, those who had been acknowledged by the predecessors could be easily recognized by their peers.

Song Chao was an incredible young genius who had been

recognized by nine predecessors during the ritual, and as such, his sect had sent him to participate in the Master Teacher Tournament... Yet, such a figure was sent into a trance just by a single word. Didn't this mean that the other party was acknowledged by even more predecessors than him?

B-but...

How was this possible?

Where in the world did this fellow come from? How could he be so formidable?

Song Chao was dumbfounded.

Chapter 478: Formation Master Guild

"Young master, have you... asked about the Soulless Metal Humanoid yet?"

Seeing the young master's slightly trembling body, the elder knew that the young master would surely lose his sanity if they were to continue discussing this topic. Thus, he hurriedly changed the subject.

"Ah? I... forgot!"

Song Chao's body swayed weakly.

He only had time to say a single sentence before the other party began pointing out the various symptoms he was suffering from. After that... he fell to the onslaught of words and lost himself.

Putting aside the Soulless Metal Humanoid, he didn't even manage to speak much.

How was he supposed to ask the question when he was in a trance?

"Then... I'll try asking..." the elder said slowly.

"Un, go on... Be careful!" After hesitating for a moment, Song Chao nodded his head.

He was a little fearful at the moment already. He was scared that if he were to go over again, he might be bewitched by the other party's words once more. Thus, it might be wiser to send his subordinate over instead.

But... Given that the other party was able to give him a lesson via the Impartation of Heaven's Will and determine the root of his problem, the other party's ranking as a master teacher was definitely above his. It was natural for a person of such capability to want to retain the Soulless Metal Humanoid to study it. If so, how could the other party possibly give it up to him?

"Yes!"

The elder nodded his head. He hurriedly walked over to Zhang Xuan who had already traveled a very far distance away during this period of time. "Zhang shi, we wish to buy the Soulless Metal Humanoid. May I know if... you're interested in selling it? Our young master is willing to offer two half 5-star master teacher Tutelage Jade Tokens for it!"

"Forty-thousand spirit stones!" Zhang Xuan came to a stop.

"This price is already extremely high. Even our young master only has three of such Tutelage Jade Token... Wait a moment, what did you say?"

The elder thought that Zhang shi would reject him outright, but contrary to his expectation, the other party tossed out a price so

candidly. Taken aback, the elder attempted to verify the matter by asking, "You're saying that you're willing to sell it to us at... forty-thousand spirit stones?"

Hu!

Before he could finish his words, a shadow flashed across his eyes and a Soulless Metal Humanoid appeared on the floor.

"If you can produce the spirit stones, you can take the metal humanoid away. I won't be accepting any Tutelage Jade Token. If you don't have the money to pay up... I'll have to ask of you to leave!"

Zhang Xuan waved his hands.

He was in a rush to compile and study the Heaven's Path Divine Art, and he didn't want to waste any time dawdling here.

Since Zhang Xuan had already examined the Soulless Metal Humanoid already, it was of no use to him anymore. Rather to keeping it with him, he might as well sell it for a profit.

"...So simple?"

Standing behind, Song Chao had thought that the elder would surely fail. Never in his dreams did he expect the matter would be so simple...

If only he'd known that the fellow had the intention to sell it, he wouldn't have tried to act cool and insist on offering guidance to the other party. In the end... not only did he fail in his deed, he became the one being taught instead...

He had truly embarrassed himself greatly today...

Song Chao felt frenzied.

As a master teacher, he was always able to perceive the intentions and meaning behind the actions of others. Yet, this fellow before him didn't seem to obey any common sense at all. It felt as though he was knocking his head on a rock, every interaction with the other party simply left him faint-headed.

"Zhang shi, are you serious in selling the Soulless Metal Humanoid to me for forty-thousand spirit stones?"

Unable to hold back his agitation, Song Chao stepped forward.

"If you can't afford it, the deal is off!"

Putting away the metal humanoid into his storage ring, Zhang Xuan prepared to leave once more.

"I'll buy it..."

With a reddened face, Song Chao hurriedly spoke up.

Huala!

After saying those words, a mountain of spirit stones immediately appeared before everyone's eyes. It totaled up to exactly forty-thousand.

"Un, the metal humanoid is yours then!" Taking the spirit stones, Zhang Xuan tossed the metal humanoid to the other party's side, turned around, and left.

"Thank you, Zhang shi..."

Grabbing over the Soulless Metal Humanoid, Song Chao quickly placed it into his storage ring, fearful that the other party might change his mind. However, right after he kept the item, he suddenly froze. An urge to bash his head into the nearest pillar suddenly gripped him.

"I fell for his trick again! My forty-thousand spirit stones..."

How could he not even have tried to haggle with the other party? Clearly, he had fallen for the other party's Impartation of Heaven's Will once more, resulting in him taking out the sum immediately...

Thpse were his total savings throughout the years. To think that he would be sapped dry by the other party in an instant... Why did it have to be so damned?

What kind of monster was the other party?

"Congratulations, young master. You finally managed to obtain the Soulless Metal Humanoid..." The elder clasped his fist.

"Scram!"

Song Chao was already in a very bad mood, and when he heard the congratulations, he immediately erupted.

"Keng... alright!"

Perplexed, the elder scratched his head doubtfully. What was wrong with the young master? Did he... damage his brain somehow?

...

While relishing in the joy of having just earned forty-thousand spirit stones with little to no effort, Zhang Xuan returned back to his room. With a flick of his wrist, several rows of bookshelves appeared before him.

With this, he wouldn't have to worry about having insufficient spirit stones for his cultivation in the short term.

The pressing matter at hand was for him to read through more

books so that he could raise his cultivation.

Sliding his finger across the rows of books, identical books appeared in his head.

Soon, all of the cultivation technique and battle technique manuals that Hall Master Sai had collected were replicated within the Library of Heaven's Path.

"Compile!"

Placing all of the Transcendent Mortal 1-dan Prolonged Longevity realm cultivation techniques together, Zhang Xuan willed.

Hu!

An entirely new book appeared before Zhang Xuan's eyes.

Picking it up, he began flipping through it.

"Transcendent Mortal, also known as Surmounting Mortality and Mortal Metamorphosis, refers to the stage where one evolves beyond the limits of mortals. One's level of existence will be increased significantly. In order to transcend mortality, one has to abstain from inferior mortal sustenance and feast on the spiritual energy in the air instead. [Those who consume material sustenance are intelligent but die, those who consume spiritual energy are intelligent and lasting...](#)"

The content of the book appeared in Zhang Xuan's eyes.

After an unknown period of time, he breathed out a mouthful of turbid air and opened his eyes.

He had finished comprehending the essence of the Transcendent Mortal 1-dan Heaven's Path Divine Art, and he was ready to cultivate it now.

"Let's begin!"

Sitting cross-legged on the bed, he flicked his wrist and a spirit stone appeared in his hand. Driving his zhenqi according to the method detailed in the cultivation technique, he began absorbing spiritual energy from the spirit stone.

Kacha!

Two breaths later, the spirit stone in his hand was reduced to powder.

"Hmm? This..."

Zhang Xuan's face twitched.

Spirit stones were a natural product of the world. They contain spiritual energy and each of them are crystal clear... Going by

logic, it should be exceptionally tough. Why did it simply crumble all of the sudden?

Lowering his head to assess the situation, a bizarre expression soon surfaced.

"The spiritual energy within... has been fully absorbed?"

Looking at the crumbled spirit stone on the floor, it was completely white, reminiscent of ashes. Clearly, the spiritual energy within it had been devoured completely.

"This... How many spirit stones will I require to make the breakthrough to Transcendent Mortal 1-dan?"

Zhang Xuan felt faint-headed.

He thought that several hundred spirit stones would be sufficient for him to reach Transcendent Mortal 1-dan. Given that he had several ten thousand in his possession now, it should be a piece of cake. However, it seemed like he was severely underestimating his consumption rate.

Transcendent Mortal meant evolving beyond mortality.

His body had been tempered by Heaven's Path zhenqi, making it far superior to that of ordinary humans. As such, the difficulty in him making the leap from a mortal to the next realm was hundred times greater than them as well.

It was easy to expand a ditch of one-meter radius wide by twofold but expanding an ocean by twofold... was exponentially more difficult!

That was exactly the case with him.

Nourished by the Heaven's Path zhenqi, his physical body and soul had undergone a qualitative change, making him invincible among his fellow peers. However, this also made it harder for him to make the final breakthrough.

"If I were to absorb them one by one, it would just be a matter of time before I died of exhaustion..."

Zhang Xuan had several ten thousand spirit stones at the moment. It should be sufficient to fuel his breakthrough, but... the spiritual energy contained within these low-tier spirit stones was limited. On top of that, his consumption was extremely great... If he were to go on like that, having to pause his cultivation to replace a broken spirit stone every two breath, it would be incredibly inconvenient!

Who knows how long it would take for him to reach Transcendent Mortal realm if he had to do it that way?

Even if there was sufficient water in a bottle to alleviate one's thirst, if one could only drink a drop at a time, one would still die of dehydration!

In other words, Zhang Xuan had to find a way to extract the spiritual energy from the spirit stones so that he could cultivate continuously without pause.

"Formations!"

Frowning, an occupation suddenly appeared in Zhang Xuan's mind.

Holding a spirit stone one at a time to cultivate wouldn't work out at all. There was only one way if Zhang Xuan wanted hundreds or even thousands of spirit stone to provide him spiritual energy simultaneously... Formations!

Back then, after eradicating the Lin Clan, Zhang Xuan had read through several books regarding formations and learned that some of the more formidable Spirit Gathering Formations were capable of extracting spiritual energy from spirit stones and gather them in the area.

If he had this kind of formation, he could simply put spirit stones in it and the spiritual energy within them would be extracted automatically. If so, his cultivation would become much smoother.

"I should go and look for some formations!"

Zhang Xuan stood up.

Along with the rise in his cultivation, his requirement for spiritual energy would increase exponentially as well. Even if he had sufficient spirit stones, cultivation would become terribly inefficient.

Walking out of the room, Zhang Xuan went to look for Hall Master Sai.

"Hall Master Sai, may I know if there is a Formation Master Guild in Honghai City? If so, could you take me over, please?"

Hall Master Sai looked at Zhang Xuan and asked, "As a large commercial city, there's no reason why Honghai City wouldn't have a Formation Master Guild. Does Zhang shi intend to purchase formation plates in preparation for the trip to the soul oracle tomb?"

Formation plates were a miniaturization of a formation and could be easily carried around with one. Even if one weren't a formation master, one could still activate it by infusing one's zhenqi into it. As such, it was one of the most sought-after product in the Formation Master Guild.

The trip to the soul oracle tomb was filled with dangers. With a formation plate in hand, Zhang Xuan would gain another assurance on his survivability.

"Formation plate? Right, I also wish to see if there's anything suitable there to buy!"

Zhang Xuan nodded.

If he could find a Spirit Gathering Formation plate, he could easily carry it around and use it whenever he needed it. That would surely prove to be convenient.

"I am old buddies with the head of the Formation Master Guild, Guild Master Zheng Jingfeng. He has the highest tiered formation plates in the entire Honghai City. Allow me to take you there, I'm certain I can get you something you'll be satisfied with!" Hall Master Sai said.

"I'll be depending on Hall Master Sai then!" Knowing that this was a gesture of goodwill from the other party, Zhang Xuan didn't turn it down.

Due to the unique role that the Appraiser Hall played in Honghai City, it was located at the center of the various guilds. As such, it wasn't too far away from the Formation Master Guild. In just ten minutes, they had already arrived at their destination.

Previously, at Tianwu Kingdom, Zhang Xuan had paid the Formation Master Guild a visit to gather the books contained within. Compared to the magnificent infrastructure standing before him at this very moment, the Tianwu Kingdom felt nothing more than a crude shack.

The gates to the guild were tall and majestic, and an Eight Trigram was imprinted on it, creating a profound and mysterious air to it.

Stepping into the guild, Zhang Xuan immediately felt the air around him change. The temperature was comfortable, the air was slightly moist, and the surroundings were concentrated in spiritual energy. It felt as though one had walked into a garden in spring, and an indescribable sensation of relaxation and tranquility swept over him.

"This..."

Zhang Xuan blinked his eyes.

It was already late autumn, and winter was about to set in soon. How could this area be warm as though spring?

"The Formation Master Guild has set up a formation here so that it'll be permanently spring in here..." Seeing Zhang Xuan's expression, Hall Master Sai understood what Zhang Xuan was thinking of and stroked his beard. "Don't worry, this formation will only put one in a comfortable position. It doesn't possess any offense capability so there's no need to worry!"

"To set up such an elaborate formation just for comfort... As expected of the Formation Master Guild!" Zhang Xuan commented in awe.

To control such a huge formation so precisely such that it was limited to the interiors of the guild was a difficult feat. The Myriad Kingdom Alliance Formation Guild was indeed formidable. Just this formation itself was probably grade-3 pinnacle or perhaps

even grade-4!

These words came from a compilation of philosophical works known as Zhunнан Zi (Work of the Northern King) in the Western Han era.

The entire saying is as follows:

Those who consume water can swim and tolerate the cold, those who consume earth are heartless but wise, those who consume wood are strong and rough, those who consume grass are agile but unintelligent, those who consume meat are brave and tough, those who consume grains are brilliant but die, those who consume air are enlightened and lasting, those who don't consume are immortal and divine.

Chapter 479: Give Me a Moment

The vast lounge was filled with a huge crowd walking to and fro. There was a long queue in front of the front counter.

Formation plates, weapon, and pill, these three were known as the necessities for a journey. However, the variety and number of formation plates that the Formation Master Guild sold everyday was limited so there was often a long queue of people hoping to buy just one.

"Paying respects to Hall Master Sai!"

Walking around the crowd, before Zhang Xuan and Hall Master Sai could reach the reception, a young man had already walked forward to welcome them.

"I have some matters to ask of Guild Leader Zheng, I'll be troubling you to lead the way." Hall Master Sai waved his hands.

"My teacher is currently in the midst of inscribing a formation plate. I'll lead you there now!" The young man smiled and led the way.

Walking along the stairs up to the second floor, it didn't take long before they arrived at a room. Formation plates of all sizes were placed around the room, and at the very center sat an elder who was busy carving something.

A formation required a formation core and formation flags to be placed in a manner that complemented the geographical terrain to maximize its might. As such, setting one up and activating it were extremely troublesome processes, and only those who were well-versed in it were capable of the feat.

Formation plates were much simpler in comparison. One just had to inscribe a miniaturized version of the formation on the unique round plate, and just by infusing one's zhenqi into it, one would be able to trigger it.

But formation plates had two major flaws to them.

Firstly, due to its size, it was unable harmonize with the surroundings and thus, it typically only contained around half the might of an ordinary formation.

Secondly, every usage would result in immense damage to the formation plate. As such, it was limited by the number of uses, and while five times was the maximum, it was often the case that the formation plates broke after the first use.

While the flaws couldn't be said to be insignificant, its benefits still far outweighed its disadvantages. Otherwise, there wouldn't be so many people queuing up for it.

Its greatest strength lay in that anyone, even those who were completely unknowledgeable in formations, could use it. Secondly, it was convenient to carry around and it could be activated quickly and easily — one just had to infuse zhenqi into it — thus, making it

a valuable tool in times to danger.

The elder in the room seemed to be in his sixties but there wasn't the slightest trace of facial hair on his face. His large hand was holding a small carving knife, and he was carefully carving a plate.

The creation of a formation plate was an extremely complicated process. After all, what one was trying to do was to condense a massive formation into a round plate around the size of one's palm. The difficulty of the task was obvious with just a single thought. With the slightest mistake, the inscribing process might very possibly end in failure.

Inscribing formation plates was somewhat similar to forging pills. Even 4-star formation masters couldn't claim to be able to succeed all the time. The creation of every single plate was an extremely effort and time-consuming process.

"Teacher, Hall Master Sai is here!"

Walking into the room, the young man bowed.

Putting down the carving knife, the elder raised his head, looked at his old friend, and smiled. "I've always been the one to look for you in the past, what brings you here today?"

"I have something that I have to request of Guild Leader Zheng this time!"

Hall Master Sai nodded before introducing, "This is Zhang shi. He hopes to purchase a formation plate, and after some consideration, I felt that the items you sold here are the most reliable of them all so I brought him over!"

"Zhang shi?"

Guild Leader Zheng stood up and assessed Zhang Xuan with a doubtful expression.

He knew the temper of this old friend of his very well. The latter was an extremely proud person, and he acted extremely casually even with him. Yet, when the latter was introducing the young man, he spoke with a very grave and earnest tone which left him intrigued.

Taking a closer look, he couldn't find anything unique about this young man. One thing notable was that he was unable to see through the cultivation of the latter, but even so, given how his actions weren't aligned with the flow of the world, it was clear he hadn't reached Transcendent Mortal realm yet.

A young lad who hadn't reached Transcendent Mortal actually made his old friend act so respectfully?

"May I know what kind of formation plate Zhang shi is looking for? Confinement Formation, Slaughter Formation, Illusion Formation... I've a few of those in stock!" Even though Guild Leader Zheng was perplexed, he had only just met the other party and it would be rude to ask of it before him.

"What I wish to find is a... Spirit Gathering Formation!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Spirit Gathering Formation?" Guild Leader Zheng was perplexed. "... There's no such formation plate. Usually, it's set up at a certain fixed location..."

Spirit Gathering Formation was mainly used for cultivation, and normally, it would be set up by some influential powers at a specific location to groom their talents. On the other hand, formation plates were often viewed as an offensive or defensive measure.

Thus, very few people would inscribe a Spirit Gathering Formation on a formation plate, and even he, the guild leader of the Formation Master Guild, had never done it before.

In truth, Guild Leader Zheng wasn't the only one who was surprised. Even Hall Master Sai was taken aback.

Hall Master Sai had thought that Zhang shi was buying a formation in preparation for the exploration of the soul oracle tomb. However, from the looks of it now, it didn't seem like that was the case. After all, what was the use of a Spirit Gathering Location in there? Was he supposed to throw it in to gather 'spirits' and capture soul oracles?

"There's no such item?" Zhang Xuan frowned.

"Indeed. I've never drawn it before. If you really require it, I can draw one for you. However, it'll take some time!" After a moment of hesitation, Guild Leader Zheng said.

The purpose of a Spirit Gathering Formation was to gather spiritual energy. As such, one would be affected by the disturbances in the spiritual energy while inscribing the formation plate. As Guild Leader Zheng had never tried it before, he didn't dare give his word.

How long will it take?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"This... I've never inscribed it before so I might take some time to grasp it properly. At worst, it might take an entire month. However, if no hiccups occur, I should be able to finish it within... half a month!" Guild Leader Zheng said.

"Half a month?" Zhang Xuan shook his head.

Too long.

He was supposed to meet Luo Zhu tomorrow and set off for the soul oracle tomb. Before that, for his and his students' safety, he had to at least reach Transcendent Mortal 1-dan. By the time the formation plate was done, it would already be too late.

"Why? Do you doubt my capability?" Seeing Zhang Xuan's action of shaking his head, Guild Leader Zheng's face darkened.

Of all things, to be buying a Spirit Gathering Formation formation plate... do you even know the slightest thing about formations? If not for my old friend making this request of me, I'd definitely have thrown you out instantly!

Yet, you still dare to shake your head at me?

"Oh, I'm not saying that you can't inscribe it!"

Hearing the displeased edge in the other party's voice, Zhang Xuan realized that the other party was mistaken. Thus, he immediately clarified sheepishly, "It's just that I think your speed is a little too slow. Half a month... is a little bit too long. I really have urgent use for the formation plate now. If you can finish it within two hours, I'm willing to pay a little more!"

"Too slow? Two hours?"

Guild Leader Zheng's face immediately steeled. Flinging his sleeves, he bellowed, "Hall Master Sai, is this your guest? I don't welcome him here! Xiaowu, send our guest out!"

Two hours?

Do you think that inscribing formations can be done as easily as eating or drinking?

Putting aside the Spirit Gathering Formation which he had never inscribed before, even Confinement Formations and Slaughter Formations which he was familiar with would require at least a week time to inscribe. On top of that, that was assuming that his full concentration was into the task such that he didn't make the slightest error.

Otherwise, even one month would be insufficient to inscribe a single formation plate.

And that was still if he did it himself. If it was a 3-star formation master of the guild, it would take at least half a month to inscribe a single formation plate.

Yet, this fellow wanted it done... within two hours?

Are you here to make a fool out of yourself or are you trying to mock me?

"Yes..." The young man who brought the two of them in walked over and gestured, "This way please!"

In truth, the young man was also dissatisfied with Zhang Xuan's attitude.

He was a 2-star formation master and inscribing a single formation plate would take him more than a month. Yet, this fellow expected his teacher to finish one within two hours. Clearly, he wasn't a customer but a troublemaker.

"Guild Leader Zheng, please calm down."

Not expecting his old friend to chase them away all of a sudden, Hall Master Sai immediately walked up with a flushed face, "Zhang shi is just unfamiliar with formations. In terms of appraising ability, he's a 5-star appraiser who has passed the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblet. His capability is far above me!"

"5-star appraiser?"

Guild Leader Zheng leaped in shock.

He thought that his old friend was so fearful of Zhang shi due to the latter's prestigious background. Never in his dreams did he expect the other party to be a 5-star appraiser!

With just this identity, there was no one who would dare to trifle with him in Honghai City. It was no wonder why he dared to spout such arrogant words.

"Un!" Hall Master Sai nodded his head.

While master teachers immersed themselves in multiple occupations, they were, by no means, omniscient. Zhang shi's words had clearly reflected his position as an amateur in the occupation.

And his guess was right. Even though Zhang Xuan had read through the books in Tianwu Kingdom Formation Master Guild and assimilated them, due to the guild being of too low tiered, there wasn't much information on formation plates detailed within them. Thus, even though those were basic information, Zhang Xuan was unaware of them.

"Pardon me, I was unaware of Zhang shi's identity!"

Upon knowing that the other party was a 5-star appraiser, Guild Leader Zheng immediately reined in his previous attitude and bowed respectfully with a clasped fist.

While the ranking of an appraiser didn't tie in with one's cultivation, it was still a respected occupation due to its involvement in dealing with precious artifacts. Even as the head of the Formation Master Guild, he didn't dare to offend the other party easily.

Not to mention, the other party was still a master teacher on top of that.

"You're being too polite!"

Zhang Xuan waved his hands, not paying it any heed. After some contemplation, he asked, "Since it's impossible to succeed within two hours, may I ask you to sell me a set of Spirit Gathering Formation's formation flags, core, and blueprint instead?"

Since there was no formation plate to be sold here, he could try doing it himself instead. As long as he had the formation blueprint, flags, and core in possession, it wouldn't be too difficult for him to succeed.

"Formation blueprint, flags, and core? We do have them but if one isn't an official formation master, they'll be completely useless..." Guild Leader Zheng said.

Formations had to be laid out in a way that aligned with the environment. If one didn't know the slightest thing about formations, it would be useless even if one were to obtain the formation blueprint, flags, and core.

If one could simply forge it with just these three items, they, as formation masters, would have already gone out of business long ago!

"It'll suffice as long as you sell it to me. I'll find a way myself after that!" Knowing what the other party was worried about, Zhang Xuan continued.

"This isn't a problem of whether I am willing to sell or not..."

Seeing the other party insist on the matter, Guild Leader Zheng's face darkened. He couldn't help but shake his head.

Why did Hall Master Sai bring such an unreliable lad here?

Formation flag, core, and blueprint were useless in the hands of ordinary people. Furthermore, they were extremely expensive... It was truly a waste of resources in the hands of the other party.

Besides, while I could sell the formation flags and core to you, the blueprint... That is something similar to pill formulas. There are strict rules within the guild, and as long as one isn't an official formation master, one would be prohibited from looking at it, needless to say, sell it.

From the previous exchange, it was clear that this fellow was a person who didn't know a thing about formations.

Putting aside selling formation flags and core, formation blueprint... Aren't you dreaming?

If anyone could simply look at the blueprints and buy them as and when they please, what kind of prestige would the guild retain?

"How about this? If you can set up a formation and prove that you're an official formation master, I'll let you see the formation blueprint and record it down. I'll also sell the formation flags and core to you... But if you can't do it, you'll have to drop the matter!"

Shaking his head, Guild Leader Zheng gave an ultimatum.

"If I can set up a formation, you'll sell them to me?" Zhang Xuan stared at the other party.

"That's right!" Guild Leader Zheng nodded his head. Then, a slight frown appeared on his face as he continued, "Why? Is Zhang shi a formation master as well?"

But before he could finish his words, Zhang Xuan had already shut his eyes.

"... Give me a moment!"

Chapter 480: Perfect Harmony, Absence of Ripples

"Give you... a moment?"

Guild Leader Zheng's body swayed from side to side.

Why did it feel like this fellow didn't understand human speech?

I asked whether you are a formation master and yet you replied with 'give me a moment'...

What does that mean?

Do you mean that you aren't one now, and a moment later you'll be one?

Aren't you just pulling my leg?

All of the Upper Nine Paths occupation required one to put in immense effort before one could qualify as a member. Even a genius would require several years of perseverance to succeed.

Yet, this ignorant fellow actually said give him a moment...

Give you a moment for what? For you to embarrass yourself?

Besides... Closing your eyes?

Close your head! What the hell are you up to?

Guild Leader Zheng's face twitched. If not for the fact that the other party was a 5-star appraiser, he would have surely kicked the other party out already.

"Old Zheng, I think you'd better prepare the set of formation flags and the core!"

Seeing that his old friend was coming to the limit of his tolerance, Hall Master Sai stepped forward and advised.

"Prepare?"

"Indeed. If Zhang shi said so, he must have a plan in mind. Besides, it wouldn't be too much effort to prepare a set!" Hall Master Sai replied.

He didn't know where did Zhang shi's confidence come from, but after witnessing the various miracles the other party had produced, his trust for the other party had nearly reached an unconditional level.

This was a person who could even teach a 4-star master teacher. Somehow, Hall Master Sai didn't think that it would be surprising if he learned about formations on the spot and succeeded.

"Alright, I'll believe you this time! Xiaowu, take out the formation flag and core for the Spirit Gathering Formation you have been using to practice over the past few days!"

Seeing the deep trust his old friend had in this young man, Guild Leader Zheng shook his hands in frustration.

"Yes!" The young man flicked his wrist and a bunch of objects appeared on the floor.

Formations were built using formation flag and formation core.

These two were crafted using unique materials. There were differing attributes to them depending on the formation they were used for.

Xiaowu was a 2-star formation master and recently, he had been practicing a graded-2 Spirit Gathering Formation. Thus, he had been keeping a set of it in his storage ring.

After the various objects were taken out, the crowd turned to that fellow, only to see that his eyes were still tightly shut. It was hard to tell what he was doing.

"Could it be that... Zhang shi intends to learn about formation on the spot? But even if he were to learn it right now... he should at least be browsing through books or consulting a teacher. To be standing blankly on the spot, what is he up to?"

Hall Master Sai was perplexed.

The study of formations involved innumerable profound secrets. Thus, it was imperative for one to find a formidable teacher to learn about the basic properties of geography, five elements, yin-yang. This was the first time he had seen someone learning by standing idly with a dazed expression.

But if he wasn't studying, what else could he be doing?

Everyone was perplexed.

In truth, it was exactly as everyone was thinking. Zhang Xuan was studying formations.

Previously, he had gathered quite a few books on formations in the Library of Heaven's Path. However, he hadn't organized and read through them yet.

At this moment, with his attention immersed within the Library of Heaven's Path, all of the books regarding formation floated before him.

"Compile!"

With a silent mutter, a book with the words 'Heaven's Path Formation Art' appeared before him. He quickly flipped it open.

A vast sea of knowledge came gushing into Zhang Xuan's mind.

"Since I've already assimilated these knowledge, I'm only reorganizing them at this moment. Thus, it's much simpler and more efficient..."

Previously, back when he was in Tianwu Kingdom, he had used the golden page to assimilate the knowledge of formations, pill forging, medicine... contained within the books he duplicated into the Library of Heaven's Path. Even though he had never gone through them before, the knowledge was already imprinted in his head.

With this serving as a foundation, learning the Heaven's Path Formation Art became extremely easy.

Knowledge flowed through his mind, and in just ten breaths, he had already mastered it.

If it was an occupation he was completely ignorant about, it would have taken at least two hours. But with a strong foundation built from the prior knowledge obtained through assimilation, all he had to do was to do was to reorganize the information.

Hu!

Opening his eyes, Zhang Xuan turned to the crowd.

"Are the formation flag and core here already? Do I set up the formation here?"

"Cough cough..."

Guild Leader Zheng was just waiting to see what intentions the other party had when the other party suddenly opened his eyes and said such words.

Just a moment ago, he was still completely ignorant about formations... And after shutting his eyes for a moment, he wanted to try his hand on setting up a formation already... Fine! I would like to see what kind of formation you set up!

"Since you think you're ready, you can just set it up here!"

Suppressing his rage, Guild Leader Zheng flung his sleeves and harrumphed.

"Alright!"

Nodding his head, Zhang Xuan walked over to grab the formation flag and core.

Seeing his actions, putting aside Guild Leader Zheng, even Xiaowu's face was streaked with dark lines.

The very first step one should do before setting up a formation

was to study the surroundings and measure the positioning of the formation. Through this, one would be able to tap into the natural flow to generate energy for the formation. Only then would one set up the formation accordingly to gather that energy. This fellow didn't even bother taking out his compass to make measurements. The first thing he did was to dive straight at the formation flag, as though a glutton seeing a pile of meat... You call this setting up a formation?

You must be kidding!

Even pigs would be able to fly if you can set up a formation like that.

"Hall Master Sai, what kind of person... did you bring here this time?"

Harrumphing angrily, Hall Master Zheng sent a message to the Hall Master Sai telepathically.

"Zhang shi... is a truly formidable person!" Hall Master Sai replied with a slightly reddened face.

He had only been in contact with this Zhang shi for a few days. From the first time they met at the First Class Pavilion, the other party had barged through the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets and nearly tore down the entire Appraiser Hall through that... he even managed to solve the issue of a possession by a soul oracle! Such a talented person shouldn't do something he was unconfident in. Why did he simply seem so unreliable at this

moment?

He knew that there were three things one had to do before setting up a formation. Firstly, one had to take out a compass to measure the magnetic field and the concentration of spiritual energy in the air. Next, one had to measure the size of the formation and deduce the various problems that could occur when the formation fused in with the surroundings so as to make precautions beforehand. Finally, one would calculate the specific locations which the formation core and flags had to be placed at before proceeding on to set up the formation.

Putting aside 1-star and 2-star formation master, even his old friend, the guild leader, had to spend a significant amount of time preparing beforehand. Without an hour or two of preparation, it would be impossible for him to set up a formation successfully.

Furthermore, this was only for the most basic formations. For those that spanned over several hundred meters or even several thousand meters would take at least several years of conception and deduction before there was a possibility of success.

Yet, this fellow... without a compass, without any deduction process, and without examining the grounds, went straight for the formation flag and core...

He was taking this way too lightly!

"Formidable? You call this formidable? Hmph, I don't care whether he is a 5-star appraiser or not. Later, when he fails, take

him away. Our Formation Master Guild doesn't welcome such a frivolous person!"

Guild Leader Zheng harrumphed.

"This..." Hall Master Sai was placed in an awkward position. Just as he was about to speak in Zhang shi's stead to salvage his reputation, the voice of the latter echoed.

"Done!"

"Done? What's done?"

Taken aback, the duo quickly turned their heads over.

The formation flag and core that Zhang Xuan just picked out had been tossed out, and it stabbed upright into the ground not too far away. It was arranged in a very unique position within a circular radius of six to seven-meter.

"Didn't you ask for a Spirit Gathering Formation? I've set up one for you!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Set up one? This is a Spirit Gathering Formation?"

Hall Master Sai looked at the layout before him with a dazed expression.

The positioning of the formation flag and core did resemble a Spirit Gathering Formation...

But he didn't understand too much about formations so he couldn't make a clear judgement. As such, he quickly turned his eyes to Guild Leader Zheng.

"You might have gotten the shape but the intent is lacking! You call this a formation?" Flinging his sleeves, Guild Leader Zheng's eyebrows shot up.

Seeing the other party flying into a rage, Hall Master Sai asked, "Why? Is there a mistake with what Zhang shi set up?"

"Xiaowu, come and give me your evaluation of this formation!"

Instead of replying, Guild Leader Zheng placed his hands behind his back and harrumphed.

"Yes!" The young man, Xiaowu, walked forward.

"The position of the formation core and flag are correct. However... a formation doesn't work just by following the layout in the blueprint strictly. More importantly, it has to be capable of stimulating the spiritual energy in the environment!"

Xiaowu analyzed confidently.

"Stimulating the spiritual energy in the environment?"

"That's right!" Flicking his wrist, Xiaowu took out a compass. With that object in hand, his disposition immediately changed. It was just a moment ago that he seemed like a mere follower but at this instant, he carried the airs of a true formation master.

"Look at what he has set up. There isn't even the slightest disturbance in the spiritual energy in the air at all. In other words, the formation flags aren't placed in the most accurate positions to complement the environment. Naturally, his formation doesn't hold any power at all, and this is what we call... an ineffectual formation!"

"Ineffectual formation?"

"Un. Since it's a Spirit Gathering Formation, it should gather the spiritual energy in the air as soon as it is laid out. The spiritual energy in the air should be drawn in as though a typhoon in the water and gather in this region. But this... the spiritual energy is showing no signs of gathering at all. In other words, he has only emulated the shape of the formation in the blueprint instead of setting up a formation!" Xiaowu said.

Positioning the formation correctly didn't equate to setting up a formation. Even though it sounded extremely profound and complex, this was actually basic knowledge that all formation masters, even if one was an apprentice, would know.

It was just like how an apothecary wouldn't necessarily form a

pill even if they were to follow the sequence recorded in a pill formula perfectly.

A formation blueprint was just a fixed arrangement. For a formation to work, one had to align it with the environment.

"Well-said! Alright, Zhang shi, in consideration that you're Hall Master Sai's friend, I will overlook this farce; you should leave!" Hearing his student's analysis, Guild Leader Zheng could tell that he had improved significantly during this period of time and he nodded his head in satisfaction.

"Farce? How is this a farce?"

Zhang Xuan didn't expect the formation that he had set up with such great effort would be considered as a farce.

"Your formation failed to draw in spiritual energy from the surroundings. Shouldn't this be sufficient to show that your formation is nothing but a farce?" Seeing that the other party refuse to accept his own failure, Guild Leader Zheng was displeased.

"Oh... You mean this. I was afraid that you can't see it properly so I stopped the formation for the time being!"

Zhang Xuan thought that the other party was referring to something else so he shook his head. Then, he stomped his foot on the ground.

Weng!

A ripple slowly spread out from his feet, striking the formation not too far away. Then, with a slight buzz, the entire formation was immediately shrouded with spiritual energy.

Huhuhu!

The surrounding spiritual energy gathered toward the center of the formation as though pulled in by a hurricane, leaving a sharp pain as it brushed by the faces of the group.

"Th-this..."

It was just a moment ago that Xiaowu was gleefully pointing out the other party's errors. Upon seeing this sight, he was shocked to the point that his lower jaw was about to fall to the ground.

"This is... [Perfect Harmony, Absence of Ripples]. Even though it doesn't disturb the environment, it causes a huge uproar when activated... a perfect formation? H-how is this possible?"

Guild Leader Zheng shrieked hoarsely.

He stared at Zhang Xuan in shock, as though he was looking at a monster.

Chapter 481: Challenging the Sea of Formations

"Perfect formation?" Seeing his old friend losing his composure, Hall Master Sai was baffled.

He had heard of Confinement Formation, Illusion Formation, Beguilement Formation, Spirit Gathering Formation... But he had never heard of a perfect formation before.

"Just like with painting and pills, there are different tiers to a completed formation as well. Even when setting up the same formation, how can the might of a formation set up 2-star formation master compare to that of a 5-star formation master?"

Suppressing his confusion, Guild Leader Zheng began to explain.

Hall Master Sai was taken aback.

Even with formation plates of the same grade, everyone hoped to buy one inscribed by a higher ranked formation master as their craft tended to be more stable and powerful.

The same applied for pills as well. Those forged by higher ranked apothecaries tended to be of higher quality and thus, possessed greater medicinal effectiveness.

"The difference between formations mainly lies in how much

they complement the environment and how much energy they can borrow from the surroundings!"

Seeing the incomprehension on Hall Master Sai's face, Guild Leader Zheng explained, "Formations that reach a synchronization rate of twenty percent with the environment are termed as Initiate. A formation of this level can be successfully activated to do whatever it is intended to do. Only when one can prepare a formation of this level can one be considered an official formation master.

"At a synchronization rate of forty percent, the formation will be able to borrow a portion of the energy from the surroundings to augment the might of the formation. At this level, one's understanding of the formation can be considered to have reached intermediate-tier. As a 4-star formation master, I can still easily reach this level when setting up a grade-2 formation.

"Going on, at a synchronization rate of sixty percent, the environment and formation can be considered to be complementing one another already. This is also what we call a high-tier formation. Occasionally, while I am setting up a grade-1 formation, I can reach this level...

"Then, at a synchronization rate of eighty percent, it wouldn't be wrong to say that the environment is what that is driving the formation. Just like conscious Spirit tools, a formation of this level is able to tap into the natural energy contained in the surroundings to create hurricanes, storm, trap beings, and leave them in distress."

After saying that, Guild Leader Zheng's lips turned pale. "Even if you can break out of a formation, can you break out of your environment?"

Hall Master Sai was stunned.

One can walk out of a formation, a room, a courtyard... But everywhere one stood was the environment, so how could one walk out of it? How could one overcome it?

Upon comprehending this level, even formation masters would find it hard to break out of the formation once trapped

"Wait a moment..."

Upon recalling something, Hall Master Sai's body trembled and his eyes widened in round circles. He stared at Guild Leader Zheng in disbelief and asked, "That's just a synchronization rate of eighty percent... What about a hundred percent?"

"Indeed, it's exactly what you're thinking. It's known as the... perfect formation!"

There was a slight quiver to Guild Leader Zheng's voice as he said, "It perfectly harmonizes with one's environment such that when it's in a dormant state, it won't cause any disturbances to the surroundings, thus giving rise to the term 'Absence of Ripples'. However, the moment it is triggered, the environment will be completely changed. The formation will become the environment,

and the environment is the formation... Try thinking about it, how can cultivating in a Spirit Gathering Formation compare up to cultivating in a natural environment?"

It was just like an air-conditioner. No matter how comfortable the temperature was, it still couldn't compare to the warmth of spring.

"Using just formation flags and core to change the environment, legend has it that only formation masters of 6-star and above are capable of such a feat..."

At this point, even Guild Leader Zheng himself was in disbelief.

A while ago, this fellow before him didn't even know that Spirit Gathering Formation plates didn't exist in the Formation Master Guild and yet, in the next moment, he set up a formation that only 6-star formation masters were capable of, a perfect formation...

Am I insane or is the world going mad?

There had never been such a happening in the history of the guild!

Perplexed, the voice of the young man sounded, "You can sell the Spirit Gathering Formation flags, core, and blueprint to me now, right?"

The formation that Zhang Xuan had just prepared was the most

basic type of Spirit Gathering Formation. It wasn't capable of extracting spiritual energy from the spirit stones to fuel his consumption. To do so, a formation of at least grade-4 was required.

"Of course..."

Guild Leader Zheng nodded his head stiffly.

If a person who was capable of forging a perfect formation was unqualified to purchase those items, then wasn't him even more unqualified?

"May I know... what is Zhang shi's formation master rank?" After agreeing to the matter, Guild Leader Zheng hesitated for a short moment before asking.

While it was a known fact that only 6-star formation masters were capable of preparing a perfect grade-2 formation, some of the top-notch geniuses were able to do so as well. The person before him hadn't even reached Transcendent Mortal realm yet so clearly, it was impossible for his to rank to be too high. Even so, he wanted to know the other party's exact ranking so as to determine how he should treat him.

"Formation master? I've never taken the examination before so I can't be considered as one..." Zhang Xuan shook his head.

It was just a moment ago that he started learning about it so

naturally, he had never taken any examination of that sort before.

"You aren't a formation master?" Guild Leader Zheng's mouth twitched and his body swayed feebly.

Putting aside how other party was able to set up the formation so swiftly, the formation even reached such a high tier... And yet, the other party wasn't even an official formation master? Where in the world did this monster come from?

He was a 4-star pinnacle formation master, but in terms of speed, he couldn't match up to the other party at all. And naturally, he couldn't prepare a perfect formation either.

"May I know if... Zhang shi is willing to participate in our guild's examination?"

A thought flashed through Guild Leader Zheng's mind and his eyes lit up in desire.

There were countless branches under a headquarters. If the other party were to take the examination here, he would be considered as a genius of Honghai City. If the headquarters were to hear of it, they would definitely reward the Honghai City Formation Master Guild handsomely.

"Sure!" Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

It didn't matter to him where he took the examination. In any

case, to advance through the ranks of a master teacher, he needed more supporting occupations. Formation master was considered as one of the most influential occupations of the Upper Nine Paths. It would be for the best if he could become an official member of this group.

"Great! I'll make preparations now then..."

Upon hearing the other party agree to it, Guild Leader Zheng smiled in excitement. "As for the Spirit Gathering Formation's formation flags, core, and blueprint, once you pass the examination, there will be no need for you to buy them. I can simply give you a set!"

The Formation Master Guild operated in a similar manner to the Apothecary Guild — it was extremely difficult for a low-ranked member to access content beyond their level. He would have to clear many authorizations first.

However, if one's rank had reached the prerequisite, one could take it away straight even without payment.

"Alright!" Upon hearing that he could be spared from his expenses, Zhang Xuan hurriedly nodded his head.

Even though he wasn't lacking in spirit stones now, he felt that he should save as much as possible especially since he would require a humongous amount of spirit stone to achieve breakthroughs. Several ten thousand spirit stones might be a huge fortune to other cultivators, but to him, it might not even be

sufficient for him to reach Transcendent Mortal 2-dan.

Thus, he felt that he should save as much of it as possible.

"What is the format of the formation master examination?" Zhang Xuan asked.

He felt that he should at least ask properly before taking the examination.

Just like the master teacher examination, there were many variations to the formation master examination. Depending on the branch itself, the requirements may differ.

It was just like how in Tianwu Kingdom, the examination content to becoming a 1-star formation master was to successfully set up a grade-1 formation. As a prosperous city of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, the examination here might be slightly different.

"The examination of our branch is indeed slightly unique as compared to the other branch. It is slightly more difficult, and it is known as the... Sea of Formations!" Guild Leader Zheng said.

"Sea of Formations?" Zhang Xuan frowned.

"Un. The Sea of Formations refers to the multitude of formation that countless formation masters of the guild have left behind throughout the years. Upon entering it, one could meet with a

formation of any kind. The condition for success is to break out of the formation one is trapped in. There is a total of four stages and each stage corresponds to formations of grade-1 to grade-4 respectively. If one passes the first stage, one will be qualified as a 1-star formation master, and if one passes the second stage, one will be qualified as a 2-star formation master... so on and so forth!" Guild Leader Zheng explained.

"I see, that's indeed more difficult than setting up formations!" Zhang Xuan nodded his head.

Setting up a formation and breaking out a formation was just like ascending and descending from a mountain.

It was easy to ascend a mountain, but descending a mountain was fraught with many difficulties.

While setting up a formation, one just had to identify the correct attributes and position the formation accurately in order to succeed. But to break out of a formation... considering that one would be within the formation, it would be hard for one to get an overview of the situation to discern the type of formation. If one were to make a lapse of judgement, it would be extremely easy for one to make a fatal mistake.

"It's indeed a little difficult. However, if one possesses a deep understanding of formations, it won't be a problem at all!" Guild Leader Zheng chuckled.

"Oh?"

"Even though there are innumerable formations contained within the Sea of Formations, if one can accurately determine the type, name, and [life gate](#) of the formation quickly, breaking out of it would be much easier than setting up a formation. But regardless of which examination it is, be it the setting up of a formation or the Sea of Formations, one has to possess an in-depth understanding of formations first. Otherwise, it will be impossible for one to pass the tests!"

After explaining, Guild Leader Zheng looked at the young man before him and said, "Since Zhang shi has never taken the formation master examination before, you should start from the grade-1 formations to get used to it first. This way, you can accumulate some experience such that you won't panic when meeting with formations of higher grades."

Zhang Xuan nodded. Then, after a moment of hesitation, he asked, "But before that, I would like to pay a visit to the library!"

Even the most formidable formation that he had gathered via the Library of Heaven's Path was only of grade-2 at the moment. If he wanted to go further in the examination, he would have to browse through more books.

"You wish to browse through some books? That's fine as well. Xiaowu, take Zhang shi to the library. It has been long since anyone has challenged the fourth stage of the Sea of Formations so it'll require some preparation time anyway!"

Guild Leader Zheng chuckled.

He didn't think about the other party's request to browse through books much.

It was natural for formation masters to request for access to books to enhance their knowledge. He also frequented the library himself to look up unique formations so as to expand his horizons.

"Yes!" The young man Xiaowu nodded.

"Zhang shi..."

Zhang Xuan was led away by the young man, leaving Hall Master Sai standing in a daze on the spot with widened eyes.

Weren't you here to buy formation plates? How did it turn into you taking the formation master examination?

That was an Upper Nine Paths occupation, one of the top occupations of the continent. To take the examination so abruptly... It was almost like how he challenged the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets previously...

"Old Zheng, how far do you think... Zhang shi can go in the examination?"

He couldn't help but turn to Guild Leader Zheng.

"I have no idea how many stages he can clear but given how he's able to set up a perfect 2-star Spirit Gathering Formation so easily, his understanding of formations can only be above mine. In other words, even at worst, he's at least of 4-star pinnacle or perhaps... even 5-star!" Guild Leader Zheng said with a grim expression.

"4-star pinnacle? 5-star?" Hall Master Sai was shocked.

When he first met Zhang Shi, he only thought that the other party was formidable in appraising, but even so, that was more than sufficient to awe him. Never in his dreams did he expect the other party to be so knowledgeable in formations as well, to the extent of surpassing even his old friend.

To possess such knowledge and capability at his age... How in the world did he manage to do it?

"That's right. However, the Sea of Formations isn't easy. It'll be hard for those inexperienced to pass the examination. All I hope is for him to clear more stages so that another genius can rise from our branch!"

Guild Leader Zheng nodded his head.

"Clear more stages..."

As he replied, Hall Master Sai's mouth suddenly twitched. A thought popped into his mind.

If this fellow were to challenge the Sea of Formations, would it end up... just like the Appraiser Hall? Would he cause chaos in the Formation Master Guild as well?

Life Gate is a concept in Qi Men Dun Jia, a divination technique in China. It represents ‘the onset of Spring, when all life blooms after the harsh winter’, and it is viewed to be a symbol of prosperity.

Chapter 482: The Fearsome Illusion Formation

The books in the Formation Master Guild were significantly fewer than that of the Appraiser Hall. Almost seventy percent of the books were for 2-star formation masters and below. Having completely comprehended that level, there was no need for Zhang Xuan to go through those books once more.

As such, it didn't take him long to collect the books. In just two hours, he already had all of them duplicated in the Library of Heaven's Path.

With this collection, he had sufficient books to form Heaven's Path Formation Art 3-dan and 4-dan.

Another two hours passed, and he finally managed to master them. Rubbing his glabella wearily, he exhaled a mouthful of turbid air.

Having collected so many books and cultivated 2 dans of the Heaven's Path Formation Art, even though his cultivation had already reached Half-Transcension, he still felt slightly faint-headed and his face was ghastly pale.

But still, his hard work had brought him great benefits.

In terms of knowledge on formation, he still might not be a match for Guild Leader Zheng, but in terms of setting up

formations, the latter was definitely far from a match for him.

More importantly...

"So, this is what inscribing a formation plate means. Inscribing a Spirit Gathering Formation sure isn't easy..."

With a deep understanding of formation plates, Zhang Xuan finally understood why Guild Leader Zheng flew into a rage when he told him to finish it within two hours.

Crafting a formation plate was equivalent to carving a massive formation onto a place the size of a palm. Furthermore, it had to be aligned with the environment. As such, the difficulty of the matter was extremely great.

This was especially so for Spirit Gathering Formations. The timing of half a month that the other party gave was actually truly the fastest speed possible already.

"It's true that using ordinary means to inscribe a formation plate will be difficult. However, if I were to use the Heaven's Path Formation Art to do so, it would be much easier!"

Ordinary formations had to follow the blueprint strictly and ensure that the layout was aligned with the environment, thus making the process incredibly complex and troublesome. A single wrong mark could potentially result in the formation being ruined.

On the other hand, the Heaven's Path Formation Art emphasized on continuity and smooth flow instead. There was more flexibility in it.

Thus, using the Heaven's Path Formation Art to inscribe the same blueprint would be many times simpler than using ordinary means.

"The preparation of the Sea of Formations should be ready by now. I should go over and take a look!"

Shaking his head, Zhang Xuan decided to put aside the matter regarding the formation plate for the moment and walked out of the library.

Now that he had assimilated the books within the library, his understanding of formations had deepened. It was time for him to try out the Sea of Formations and become an official formation master.

...

"The Sea of Formations is just a name. Rather than an actual sea, it's just a long corridor. It is located at the third floor of the Formation Master Guild, and countless formations are set up in the area. As long as one walks into the area, one will be at risk of being confined, beguiled, and even... dying!"

"That is because... there are all kinds of formation in there, and

that includes Slaughter Formations as well.

"But there's no need for you to worry. Every single examinee will be given a formation amulet. When you meet with true danger, you just have to crush it and the formation will immediately come to a halt!"

At the long corridor of the Sea of Formations, a young man gestured to the surroundings as he explained the entire proceedings to his two juniors.

The three of them had come from the same teacher. It was the first time the two juniors behind was taking the formation master examination whereas the senior in front was here to take his 2-star examination.

At this moment, the two juniors were slightly nervous. Their lips had turned white and their palms were soaked with sweat.

"There's no need to worry. I'll pass the first stage later on to give you all a demonstration of the happenings inside. Remember, the formation which one will undergo is completely random so my experience is only for reference purposes. You mustn't deal with it the exact same way as I did... Do you understand?" the senior said.

"Senior, rest assured. We'll pay some attention to it!"

"Let's pass the examination so as to not let teacher down!"

The two juniors behind clenched their fists tightly.

"Good. I'll demonstrate the examination to you all now. Take note, regardless of which formation you meet with, don't be too anxious to get through with it. You must analyze it calmly as only then will you find the life gate and break out from it!"

Seeing the humility of his juniors, the senior nodded his head in satisfaction. After which, he turned around and began walking over to the long corridor of the Sea of Formations.

Weng!

As soon as he stepped in, mist immediately appeared. A formation had been activated, trapping the senior entirely.

The first stage of the Sea of Formations, a grade-1 formation!

"That wall..." The duo turned to look at the wall by the side.

By the side of the corridor, there was a wall made of special crystal which showed the situation of the one challenging the examination clearly.

Their senior's figure was currently reflected on the wall, and at this moment, he was observing the situation around him with his eyebrows knitted together.

In order to break out of the formation, one had to decipher the formation first. One had to know what kind of formation it was, where the 'life gate', 'death gate', and weakest link were... If one couldn't find these, one would never be able to break out of the formation regardless of how strong one was.

Hu!

A compass appeared in the senior's palm and he studied it intently with a lowered gaze. After which, he took three steps left and three steps right, trying to test the formation's reaction.

A short period of time later, his eyes suddenly lit up, as though having discovered something. Chuckling lightly, he started walking toward a direction at which he had decided upon.

At the same moment, he gathered strength in his palm and struck out.

Hu!

A buzzing sound echoed and the mist disappeared. A figure appeared before the duo again—it was their senior.

"Did you see that? This is the first stage. As long as you analyze it carefully and determine the origin of the flow of spiritual energy, as well as the various changes that occurs with your movements, you'll be able to deduce what kind of formation it is, confirm your current location and find the life gate... And just like that, you'll be

able to break out of the formation!"

After clearing the first stage, the senior didn't proceed straight on to the second stage. Instead, he turned around and explained the various happenings to the duo.

He was here to take the 2-star formation master examination. The 1-star examination didn't pose much of a challenge to him anymore, and the only reason he took it was just to give a demonstration to his juniors, as well as to calm their nerves.

"Yes!"

The two juniors nodded their heads.

There wasn't anything wrong with the words of their senior, but the situation was very different when one was trapped in a formation. The surroundings would be completely different — there would be no point of reference and it would be extremely easy for one to get lost. The most one could do was to analyze the flow of spiritual energy. Determining what kind of formation one was trapped in and where one was positioned within the formation would be extremely difficult.

There were more than several thousand types of grade-1 Confinement Formation. The same type of formation could be divided into several hundreds of sub-types. If one didn't possess vast understanding of formations, deciphering and escaping from it would be nigh impossible.

"Alright, I'm going to challenge the second stage now. Regardless of whether I succeed or not, you all should try to look properly and learn from my experience!"

Saying so, the senior took a deep breath and his gaze turned grave.

As a 1-star pinnacle formation master, he was more than confident in clearing the first stage. However, the second stage would be difficult for him.

Hu!

Stepping forward, the formation within the second stage was immediately activated. Just like before, a figure appeared on the wall by the side.

"Why isn't senior moving at all?"

Turning their gazes over, the two juniors soon realized that the movements of their senior had been peculiar ever since he stepped into the second stage.

Previously, he immediately took out the compass and began walking around to analyze the formation. But now, it seemed as though he was in a daze, not moving at all.

The white-robed junior suddenly thought of something and asked, "Crap, it couldn't be an Illusion Formation, could it?"

"Illusion Formation?" The green-robed junior's eyes widened in shock.

An Illusion Formation interfered with one's psyche directly. As soon as the formation was triggered, those within would be plunged into a scenario that the formation master had prepared beforehand, leaving them unable to collect themselves. As such, it was more feared than Confinement Formations.

Confinement Formations were similar to a cage in the sense that even though one might be unable to escape, one was at least able to retain their thoughts and consciousness. However, in an Illusion Formation, one's thoughts would be forced to wander, and at that moment, one would forget even one's own name and purpose. Under such circumstances, there wasn't the slightest possibility of escape.

Hu hu hu!

Just as the duo was in doubt, the pale face of their senior in the formation gradually grew more and more savage. His zhenqi grew erratic, and he randomly struck out at thin air, as though a lunatic.

Pu!

After a period of time, it seemed like his zhenqi had been fully expended and he spewed a mouthful of blood. Only then did he regain his consciousness and hurriedly crush the jade token in his hand.

The mist disappeared and he appeared before his two juniors once more. However, this time, his face was withered.

The second stage, failed!

"Senior..."

The senior's confident disposition from before had disappeared without a trace. Instead, as he walked over, he looked like a defeated rooster. His two juniors felt even more flustered.

"It's normal to fail when challenging the Sea of Formations. I can only say my luck is bad for having triggered an Illusion Formation..."

Swallowing a pill, the senior's complexion improved slightly. Turning to his two juniors, he smiled awkwardly.

"Indeed, Illusion Formations are simply too difficult..." the green-robed junior said.

"If only it was a Confinement Formation, senior would have definitely passed and become a 2-star formation master..." The white-robed junior said.

"Indeed! If it was a Confinement Formation, I'm confident that I would have cleared the stage!"

Seeing that the admiration his two juniors had for him didn't falter in the least, the senior heaved a sigh of relief. "I've done some research on the matter, and for the past decade, there was a total of 88 challengers for the 2-star formation master examination. Of that, there were 22 times that an Illusion Formation was triggered... but there wasn't a single person who cleared the stage in those 22 times! Those who cleared the examination were mainly those who faced Confinement Formation and Beguilement Formation."

"What about Slaughter Formation?"

"Slaughter Formation?" The senior shook his head. "That's even more impossible to clear. A single wrong move would spell death. It is already a blessing if one can survive within it, lest be said, escape from it..."

"It's that difficult?"

Upon learning how scary Slaughter Formations were, the two juniors began to tense up once more.

"Let me tell you honestly, no one has ever succeeded with an Illusion Formation or a Slaughter Formation before. Later on, when you enter, as soon as you realize that something is amiss, it's best that you crush the jade token immediately. There's no point struggling needlessly!"

The senior instructed grimly.

"Yes!"

The two juniors nodded their heads. "Rest assured, senior. If we encounter an Illusion Formation or a Slaughter Formation, we'll give up immediately! Since even you are unable to clear them, how could others possibly succeed? At the very least, I doubt that anyone in this guild would be able to do it..."

Just as the duo was complimenting their talented senior, at the entrance of the corridor of the Sea of Formations, a young man walked over lazily.

The young man looked younger than them, probably below twenty. His eyes were reddened with blood vessels, and it looked as though he hadn't slept for several days consecutively. Exhaustion was the only thing one could see from his face.

"Who is this fellow? Why haven't I seen him before?"

The trio was taken aback.

They had been in the Formation Master Guild for a minimum five years by now, and there wasn't a single apprentice or formation master that they didn't recognize. But that young man in front was completely unfamiliar to them.

"He's probably some apprentice who have just joined... With just one look, it's clear that his mental fortitude is lacking. He probably

hasn't slept for several days due to anxiety for the examination, that's why he's in such a state!"

"Indeed! Even his eyes are red. To think that the Sea of Formations could scare someone to this extent!"

The two juniors sneered.

They were embarrassed over their previous anxiety, but this fellow topped them on it. His clothes were unkempt and his posture was slackened. With just one look, it was clear that he hadn't slept for several nights out fear.

"What's wrong with the guild? Isn't there a limited number of slots every year for those taking the examination? How can a person like him challenge the Sea of Formations as well?"

The senior frowned as well.

Chapter 483: Kick (1)

Clearing the Sea of Formations would make one an official formation master, but not everyone was qualified to challenge it. One had to make a request beforehand and the guild leader had to approve it personally. After which, it had to be discussed upon during the conference of the elders, and a selection process would be conducted... And on top of that, one had to pay an exorbitant fee as well.

Since this fellow was here, he must have obtained an approval beforehand. When did the guild fall to such a level... that even a person with such poor mental fortitude could take on the examination as well?

It was one thing for him to be deprived of sleep, but more importantly, what that displeased him was the attitude of this fellow when facing the Sea of Formations!

There wasn't a single person who came to take the examination that didn't carry fear and respect for it. In a sense, this could be considered as one's respect for the occupation as well. Yet, this fellow was behaving so casually here. Was he that confident in the examination?

Disgusted, the senior instructed, "Let him go first. You can learn from his counter example when he fails!"

"Yes!" The two juniors nodded their head with a gleeful expression on their faces.

They didn't carry any doubt that this fellow would definitely fail.

The young man who had left the trio speechless was Zhang Xuan, who had rushed here from the library.

After reading books for such a long period of time and mastering two dans of the Heaven's Path Formation Art, it would be a miracle if he wasn't slightly withered.

Thus, as he walked over to the Sea of Formations, he adjusted his breathing to rid himself of his fatigue. Before long, he arrived before the trio.

Noticing that the gazes of the trio were on him, Zhang Xuan asked them doubtfully, "Are you all here to challenge the Sea of Formations as well?"

"We're still conditioning ourselves. If you wish to go first, feel free!"

Seeing how that fellow didn't carry the slightest respect in his tone when facing an official formation master, the senior flung his sleeves and harrumphed.

"Oh. Since you all aren't in a hurry, I won't stand on ceremony then!"

It had been awhile since he had arrived at the Formation Master Guild, and Zhang Xuan was in a hurry. Since the other party was willing to allow him to go first, Zhang Xuan chose to not turn the offer down. With a smile, he nodded his head and walked in.

"To go in without any preparation... Isn't he taking this too lightly?"

Seeing how the other party didn't try to push the offer or even look at them before rushing straight into the Sea of Formations, the trio felt as though their vision was spinning.

That was the Sea of Formations! There was no formation master who didn't feel fear for it! To charge right in without even claiming the jade token to stop the formation, wasn't he being too brazen?

"He's just asking for trouble! Even senior was unable to clear it easily and yet this fellow dares to charge in without preparation. What else can this be other than courting death!"

The green-robed junior harrumphed.

"Indeed. I bet that he'll be trapped in the first stage. By then, he will understand how fearsome formations are..."

The white-robed junior smirked.

Weng!

At that moment, the young man walked into the corridor, triggering the formations.

A mist slowly rose, shrouding his figure. At the same time, the young man's figure appeared on the wall beside.

Wuwuwuwu!

Spiritual energy flowed in the surroundings of the young man as though billowing clouds, sealing off his five senses entirely, leaving him incapable of discerning directions at all.

"It's a Confinement Formation! Given how concentrated the white mist of spiritual energy is and how fast it is flowing, if I'm not mistaken, he must have activated the [Cloud Ocean Confinement Formation]!" The senior recognized the formation.

When one was trapped in a formation, one had to use a compass to determine one's location and analyze the spiritual energy flow to determine the type of formation. But when spectating from the outside, one could easily deduce the type of the formation through its physical properties. This was much more efficient and accurate than the former.

As the saying goes, 'it is the passersby who sees things clearly.'

"Cloud Ocean Confinement Ocean? That is the most complex formation among the grade-1 formations, and it is the hardest to

deal with as well!"

"That formation seals all of one's senses, leaving one unable to determine anything at all. Even if one could use a compass to discern one's location, if one can't accurately decipher the formation, it'll be hard to escape from it!"

They didn't expect this fellow's luck to be that bad. To think that he would meet with such a formidable Confinement Formation as soon as he entered. The two juniors shook their heads in sympathy.

Even if he was lacking in capability, if he were to meet with an easy formation, he might still be able to clear it. However, having encountered such a formidable Confinement Formation, he could only raise his hands to surrender.

"See. Even if you meet with a Confinement Formation, it doesn't necessarily mean that you can break out of it. Thus, you must be on your toes at all times and, by no means, should you underestimate the formation you are in. You mustn't be like this arrogant and ignorant fellow. He's just looking for trouble..."

Seeing how that fellow inside didn't even bother taking out a compass, the senior shook his head, turned to his two juniors, and advised them.

However, before he could finish his words, his two juniors widened their eyes simultaneously, and their faces starting twitching violently.

"What's wrong?"

Seeing the two of them lose their composure, the senior frowned, "Teacher has already told you that before challenging the Sea of Formations, you must focus your attention and avoid getting arrogant or anxious. Look at what state you are in, how do you expect to succeed like that?"

"That's not it, senior. Look..."

With a reddened face, the green-robed junior hurriedly pointed to the front.

"What's there to make a fuss about? Isn't he just trapped in the Confinement Formation? Don't worry, if he isn't out within two hours, the formation will dispel itself automatically. This is just a Confinement Formation; his life isn't at risk..."

Harrumphing, the senior turned around and his latter words immediately jammed in his throat. His body stiffened and his lower jaw fell to the ground. "What?"

He thought that what he would see was a helpless young man trapped in a Confinement Formation, but contrary to his expectation, the young man was standing quietly not too far away, shaking his head calmly.

And the mist that had shrouded around him had disappeared

without a trace. In other words, the Cloud Ocean Confinement Formation which had left him fearful... had already been broken!

To stop the formation entirely...

I thought you wouldn't be able to overcome it?

Even if you have the capability to do so, surely you don't have to be so fast?

You didn't even bother taking out the compass or discern the flow of spiritual energy, and yet, in the time that I was lecturing my two juniors, the formation was already gone...

Do you need to be so extreme?

"What just happened?" Frenzied, the senior hurriedly asked.

"We also... didn't see it carefully. We only saw him kicking the formation... the-then... it simply disappeared!" the green-robed junior said.

"It disappeared with a kick? What in the world are you talking about?" The senior's face darkened.

I'm asking you how the other party overcame the formation and you're telling me that he kicked it?

Kick your head!

Do you think that a formation is a living being that will stop with a single kick? If that is true, then we, formation masters, would have long gone out of business!

This occupation wouldn't have been the dreams and fears of so many people.

"It was really just a kick..."

With his mouth twitching violently, the green-robed junior protested. He was already nearly on the verge of tears.

He had seen with his own eyes that the other party sent a kick at the formation and it immediately stopped...

But how could a grade-1 pinnacle Cloud Ocean Confinement Formation be broken so easily?

"It was indeed just one kick..." The white-robed junior nodded his head in a daze.

"Even he saw it, I'm not mistaken..." Upon seeing his fellow peer confirming his words, the green-robed junior ascertained that he wasn't insane and hurriedly nodded his head.

"Kick?" The senior felt frenzied.

Your heads must be the one that was kicked for you all to say such ridiculous words!

Formations are intangible... Do you think it makes sense for them to be kicked?

"Enough. Regardless of whatever method he used, it's just the first stage so it's still within an acceptable difficulty range. I don't think he'll be able to do it as easily for the latter stages!"

Seeing that his two juniors were getting incoherent, the senior waved his hands and looked at the young man in front intently.

Since he missed it previously, he was determined not to miss the other party's actions this time. He had to get to the bottom of the matter and see what method that fellow used to break out of the formation.

After all, it hadn't been too long since his juniors started learning about formations. It was possible that they were deceived by some bizarre method used by the other party, thus missing the true way.

Hu!

Thus, he gathered his attention to look at the young man. As expected, the young man who just escaped from the Cloud Ocean Confinement Formation didn't just stop right there. He proceeded on to the next stage.

Weng!

Soon, he came into contact with the formations of the second stage and a white mist rose up, shrouding the young man once more.

"It's an... Illusion Formation!" The senior narrowed his eyes.

After being plunged into an Illusion Formation a moment ago, he was already rather fearful of it. Judging from the type of mist and the movement of the spiritual energy, he immediately deduced that the fellow had met with one, and from the looks of it, it didn't seem at all inferior to the Illusion Formation he encountered previously!

"Illusion Formation?"

His two juniors were stunned. Sympathy immediately appeared on their faces.

Honestly speaking, this fellow was truly unlucky. He met with such a formidable Confinement Formation in his very first stage so they thought that perhaps, his luck might be better in the second stage. Yet, he met with the Illusion Formation which their senior failed at.

"That's right. In the formation, the clear air is rising while the turbid air is sinking. The collision of the two produces a unique

moaning sound which will cause those hearing it to suffer from hallucinations! That was precisely how I unwittingly fell under the illusion previously!" the senior said with a grim expression.

Even now, when he recalled the experience from before, he couldn't help but feel fearful.

As soon as he stepped into the formation, before he could even react, the unique sound reached his ear and assaulted his psyche, causing his consciousness to become fuzzy.

For a moment, he was completely helpless and defenseless.

If not for his body being jolted due to the depletion of his zhenqi, he would've probably been unable to pull himself out from the illusions.

"It's that fearsome?"

The white-robed junior narrowed his eyes. "Doesn't that mean that... he has no chance of succeeding at all?"

"Breaking out of an Illusion Formation requires one to have high mental fortitude. If one's mental fortitude doesn't reach a certain level, it'll be very difficult to escape from it. Given how he isn't even twenty, even if he started cultivating from a very young age, how strong can his mental fortitude be? Even I have failed, lest be said, him!"

The senior shook his head.

He didn't see how that fellow had passed, but it showed that the other party possessed a certain level of aptitude in formations. However... Illusion Formations were simply too difficult.

It wasn't just about one's comprehension of formations. More importantly, it was about one's mental fortitude.

If one couldn't maintain a calm and impervious mind, it was very easy for to get confused and lost, thus resulting in one's inability to pull out from the illusions.

In order to deal with illusions, he had undergone tough training for countless months but even so, he still failed in an instant. He found it hard to believe that a young lad who wasn't even twenty yet could do better than him.

"Look, he's starting to kick around randomly as well... The heck!"

Previously, when he succumbed to the Illusion Formation, he also began striking out randomly. This fellow was starting to show the same symptoms as well.

However, before he could finish his words, his body suddenly trembled violently.

As soon as the young man's leg kicked out, the corridor which was filled with mist suddenly cleared up.

The formation... had been broken again!

Chapter 484: Kick (2)

That was a grade-2 Illusion Formation! When he was within it, he found it hard to even discern reality from illusion. That was how fearsome it was... And yet, this fellow's random kick actually cleared away the formation?

Are you messing with me?

He had said that the juniors' claim that the other party had broken through the formation with a single kick was nonsense previously, but this time... he had witnessed it personally.

With a single kick, the Illusion Formation came to a halt...

The overwhelming incongruity between reality and expectations left him on the verge of going mad.

Possessing outstanding aptitude in formations, he had always been envied by his fellow classmates, and he managed to become a 1-star formation master at a very young age. After driving himself to the core for many years to toughen up his mental fortitude... he still ended up losing himself as soon as he stepped into a grade-2 Illusion Formation.

Yet, this fellow simply did a single kick... and the formation came to a halt!

Did reality have to be so harsh?

Did you collude with the formation to pull one over us?

While he was on the verge of a mental breakdown, the anxious voice of the green-robed junior beside him sounded, "Senior, do you think that it's calculated, or is he simply just randomly kicking around?"

"Randomly kicking around? Have you seen anyone successfully breaking out of a formation by randomly kicking around?" The senior's mouth twitched as his vision turned dark.

He had seen people randomly kicking around to incapacitate an opponent, he had also seen people randomly kicking around and causing damage to their meridians, but he had never ever heard of a person destroying a formation with just a single kick!

Formations were positioned to be aligned with the essence of the world. They were an unsubstantial existence, reminiscent to one's environment...

Have you seen anyone destroying their environment through a kick?

Thus...

It was impossible for this kick to be of random nature. It was a purposeful, well thought-out, responsible, and decisive kick! It was a kick made after seeing through the facade, peering into the very

essence, and determining the fundamental flaws!

Otherwise, how could a single kick break a formation?

"It was intentional? Then... how strong must his grasp of formations be?" The white-robed junior's lips went dry. "Even teacher would find it hard to do the same!"

Their teacher was a famous 4-star formation master even within the guild, but even he was incapable of breaking a formation so easily.

"I have no idea either. However, as long as he continues attempting the examination, we might be able to see through something!" the senior said, suppressing his shock.

There was a limit to his eye of discernment, and as such, he failed to understand how the other party broke the formation. However, if he were to continue analyzing the other party's action, he might be able to notice something.

Perhaps, he might even be able to learn a thing or two from the other party and in the future, when meeting these types of formation, he would be able to break them easily.

"Continues attempting the examination? You mean that he would challenge the third stage?"

"Given how easily he broke through a grade-2 Illusion Formation,

he must be at least a 3-star formation master. Naturally, there's no reason for him to stop here..."

"That's true!"

The trio hurriedly turned their gazes forward. Indeed, just like what they guessed, that exhausted-looking young man who seemed as though he would crumble at any moment continued advancing forward after clearing that Illusion Formation.

"At grade-3, a formation will require more than spiritual energy from the surroundings to drive it. Often, spirit stones will be placed at the formation core to power it. As such, the might of grade-3 formations is many times greater than that of grade-2, and with greater energy, there is more flexibility in the design as well. He won't be able to clear it as easily as he did before." the senior said gravely.

All formations, regardless of the type or design, required energy to drive it. It was just like how cows eat grass and humans eat rice to move. There was nothing that could move without energy fuelling it.

As grade-1 and grade-2 formations were of low tier, they could be driven just by the absorbing spiritual energy from the surroundings.

However, it was impossible for grade-3 formation to do the same.

Even though formations could absorb spiritual energy from the surroundings, a grade-3 formation would still require an accumulation of several months before it could be used once. Taking the Great Xuanyuan Formation for example, it had gathered an immense amount of energy over a thousand years but it was sapped dry just with a single usage.

As the Sea of Formations was the examination criteria for formation masters in Honghai City, there were innumerable people who were waiting to challenge it every year. They couldn't expect it to recharge itself just by absorbing spiritual energy from the surroundings. Thus, often, spirit stones would be placed at the formation core to drive it.

With energy from the spirit stones, the formations would be able to display much greater might than what they were normally capable of, thus making them harder to escape from.

This young man had managed to overcome grade-1 and grade-2 formations easily but in face of a grade-3 formation powered by spirit stones, he probably wouldn't be able to overcome it as easily as before.

Hu!

In the short time which the trio spent chatting, the grade-3 formation was triggered and the young man suddenly disappeared amidst a white veil.

In an instant, the figure on the wall seemed to have fallen into a

treacherous trap. Descending flower petals alongside sharp glints of aura filled the surroundings, creating an extremely bizarre sight.

"The descending flower petals and sharp spiritual energy... Could this be the [Qinghong Falling Petal Formation]?"

The senior's lips quivered and he nearly fell to the ground from shock.

"Qinghong Falling Petal Formation? What kind of formation is that?"

The two juniors turned to look at him.

They were only apprentices and they were here for the 1-star formation master examination. As such, they weren't well-versed in some of the higher tiered formations.

"I-it's a... Slaughter Formation!"

The senior's voice quivered.

"Slaughter Formation?"

The two juniors shuddered and they nearly bit their tongues from shock.

Of all the formations, Illusion Formation and Slaughter Formation were the most feared of all. Yet, this fellow managed to meet with the both of them. Wasn't his luck a little too bad?

Illusion Formations were already an exceedingly scary adversary—even their senior was almost unable to free himself from it—so one can imagine how frightening Slaughter Formations are. This fellow didn't take the jade token before taking the examination, he couldn't possibly die inside, right?

Suppressing his shock, the white-robed junior asked, "Is this Slaughter Formation... formidable?"

"The Qinghong Falling Petal Formation is a grade-3 pinnacle Slaughter Formation. It's said to be created by a man named Shen Qinghong 1500 years ago. The entire ground serves as a trap in itself, leaving one with nowhere to escape to. One will find himself dying tragically in the beautiful scenery... This formation has once killed a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan expert, and it's known as the strongest among grade-3 formations... Could anyone say it's not formidable?"

It was hard to tell whether the senior was nervous or scared but his voice was slightly hoarse.

"Killed a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan expert? This is already comparable to a grade-4 formation!"

The duo's eyes went wide in shock.

Grade-1 formations were capable of killing Tongxuan realm cultivators; grade-2 formations were capable of eliminating Zongshi realm cultivators; grade-3 formations were capable of subduing Zhizun realm, Half-Transcension, and even Prolonged Longevity cultivators.

And this Slaughter Formation actually managed to kill a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan! That was already comparable to the strength of some grade-4 formations... This formation wasn't to be trifled with!

Even though they were hearing it with their own ears, they still found it hard to believe.

The green-robed junior couldn't help but ask, "Then... Will he meet with any danger?"

"That'll be hard to say. It'll depend on his strength and his defensive measures. If he has nothing up his sleeves, only one conclusion remains for him... death!"

Shaking his head, the senior was about to continue speaking when he frowned, "Look, the formation is getting into action now!"

As he said those words, the sharp glints made of spiritual energy suddenly showed their ferocious side. As though arrows, they suddenly shot toward the young man from all directions.

The might of every single glint was fearsome. Even a Zhizun

realm expert would be easily impaled by them.

"It depends on how he deals with the situation now. If I were in his position, I would try to dodge those glints before looking for a plausible escape route..."

Putting himself in the other party's shoes, the senior began to analyze how the other party could escape from this calamity. But at that moment, that ordinary 'leg' was lifted up once again.

Hu!

Facing the rain of flower petals, he kicked.

"That... Isn't that courting death?"

Seeing that the fellow was still using the same move, the trio was frenzied.

There were no threats on his life in a Confinement Formation and Illusion Formation so his attempt to stop the formation with a kick could still be overlooked. However, this was a Slaughter Formation! Every single glint was a small dagger threatening to reap his life, there was no one who could possibly withstand their assault. And yet, he was kicking against them with his leg...

May I ask, what in the world are you thinking?

Frenzied, they were thinking that even if this fellow didn't die, his legs would also be sliced into innumerable pieces when the entire formation suddenly froze.

Hu!

With a buzzing sound, the sharp glints in the air suddenly dissipated. The incomparably powerful formation, which would tear the young man apart at any moment, suddenly faded away as though snow melting in the presence of spring.

The young man's figure appeared before the crowd once more.

"He broke the formation?"

"H-he... succeeded again?"

The trio looked at one another and they could see the disbelief in their eyes. For a moment, it felt as though they were struck by a bolt of lightning.

"He broke the formation with a kick once again. What in the world is going on..."

The senior's body twitched. He felt a stifling sensation on his chest which made it hard for him to breathe.

He thought that the other party had simply acted too quickly for

him to properly discern what had happened, and as long as he could see it again, he would surely be able to determine the technique the other party used to break the formation and learn a thing or two from him. But from the looks of it now... it seemed like he was overthinking it!

Breaking a formation with a kick... It was futile no matter how many times he saw such an eccentric move!

How was he supposed to learn that?

"It's not over yet, look... Am I mistaken or does it seem like he's going to challenge the fourth stage?" the green-robed junior asked.

Hearing those words, the other two immediately turned their gazes over. The young man who had just appeared in their sights shook his head, as though lamenting the formation's weakness, and started walking toward the fourth stage.

If he were to pass the fourth stage, it would mean that he would be qualified as a 4-star formation master...

A fellow who wasn't even twenty yet becoming a 4-star formation master?

Who was the one who said that he wouldn't even pass the first stage? Who was the one who looked down on him just now?

The trio felt their body stiffened, and they were on the verge of

going mad.

...

While the trio was about to lose their sanity, outside the corridor where the Sea of Formations was located, four incense sticks were lit in an incense pot. The smoke danced in the air, creating a tranquil atmosphere.

"Guild Leader Zheng, what do you mean by that? You know that my three students are challenging the Sea of Formations today and yet you still allowed that fellow to enter. Is this a personal attack?"

In front of the incense pot, a white-bearded elder lashed out furiously.

4-star Formation Master Wang Haoxun, an elder of the Formation Master Guild.

He was the teacher of the 'senior' and 'juniors' in the corridor.

His three students were challenging the Sea of Formations today, this was something that had been decided upon one month ago. And yet, the guild leader simply came over and insisted on slotting someone in. He thought that the other party would be slotting his student, Xiaowu, in as that fellow seemed ready to take on the 3-star formation master examination already...

Yet, it turned out to be a young lad whom he had never even met

before.

Even if he didn't meet the other party before, if the other party possessed true capability, he would have nothing to say. However, look at that casual and lazy attitude, the other party seemed like he would fall asleep at any moment...

Such a person was qualified to challenge the Sea of Formations as well?

If he were to succeed, it wouldn't be too long before the sun starts rising from the west!

"Elder Wang, there's no need to be so infuriated. It'll help your students if another person were to challenge the Sea of Formations as well!" Guild Leader Zheng shook his head.

"If he is able to pass, that will of course be something good. However, look at his attitude, do you think that he'll be able to pass? If he were to fail, won't he simply cause additional stress to my students? If they were to lose their composure, how are they supposed to take the examination?" Wang Haoxun harrumphed.

Challenging the Sea of Formation wasn't just about one's understanding of formations and skills, mental fortitude also played an extremely important role. Otherwise, if one were to meet with an Illusion Formation, one would lose one's composure swiftly and this could potentially result in failure.

If those who challenged the examination along with them were to produce good results, it could serve as an encouragement for his own students to do well. But on the contrary, if the results were poor, it might leave his students feeling apprehensive and this would prevent them from doing well.

"Don't worry. The reason why I slotted him into the examination is because I am confident in his ability. There's no need to worry..."

While consoling the other party, the fire on the first incense stick suddenly flickered and extinguished.

This incense stick was known as the [Incense of the Formation Sea]. It was forged alongside the Sea of Formations, and it would light itself as soon as someone challenged it.

It would take exactly two hours for each incense stick to burn all the way down. If the incense doesn't extinguish by itself during this period of time, it would mean that the challenger had failed to clear the stage and vice-versa.

If the fire on the incense stick were to extinguish, the formation inside would automatically shut down.

This was the reason why the senior said that even if one were to be trapped in the formation, there was nothing to worry about.

Thus, the Incense of the Formation Sea served both as a timer and a switch. The four incense sticks represented the four stages in

the Sea of Formations respectively.

Since the fire on the first incense stick was extinguished, it meant that someone had cleared the first stage.

"How about it? He has successfully passed the first stage, what else do you have to say?" Upon seeing the sight, Guild Leader Zheng chuckled.

"Hmph, my students entered much earlier than him. Who knows, what if one of them is be the one challenging the examination?" Wang Haoxun harrumphed.

Even though the extinguishing of the incense stick's fire meant that someone had successfully cleared the stage, there was no way of telling who it was.

It had only been around two minutes since that fellow who was on the verge of knocking out had only just entered so how could it be him? It must be his students.

"That... is possible as well!"

Taken aback, Guild Leader Zheng soon nodded his head in agreement.

Even though he had witnessed Zhang Xuan's astonishing speed in setting up formations, he had no idea about his ability in breaking formations so he didn't dare to jump into conclusions.

Even though the first stage was just a grade-1 formation, he knew that even he would be unable to clear it so swiftly. Thus, he also found it hard to accept that Zhang Xuan was the one who cleared the challenge.

"Since it's your student who cleared the stage, there's even less need for you to worry..."

Shaking his head, Guild Leader Zheng smiled. However, before he could finish his words, the fire on the second incense stick flickered and abruptly extinguished.

"The second stage has been cleared?"

Shocked.

It hadn't even been a minute since the first stage was cleared, and the second stage was already cleared?

How could anyone be that fast?

With a perplexed expression, Guild Leader Zheng asked, "This... is your student?"

"..." Wang Haoxun's face froze.

He knew the capability of his students very well. It would at least

take ten to twenty minutes or even longer for them to clear a single stage.

To break out of a formation in less than a minute...

That was way too fast!

Kacha!

Just as they were overwhelmed with shock, they saw the fire of the third incense stick flicker and extinguish.

"The third stage has been cleared as well?"

Wang Haoxun nearly burst into tears.

No matter how great his expectations for his students were, he knew that this was an impossible feat for the three of them.

Of those three, one was intending to take on the 2-star formation master examination while the other two was challenging the 1-star examination. Since the one challenging the examination cleared even the third stage so swiftly, it could only mean that it was someone else.

"It's that fellow from before?"

With widened eyes, Wang Haoxun exchanged glances with Guild Leader Zheng and the two of them fell into a frenzy.

They weren't surprised by the other party's feat of clearing the third stage but that... he was simply too fast!

They could still accept it if the other party was able to clear the first and second stage easily. However, the formations in the third stage were driven by spirit stones, and even they would be slightly troubled to break out of them. To do it so quickly... how in the world did he accomplish it?

"Since he cleared the three stages so quickly... Do you think he'll pass the fourth one as well?"

Recovering from the shock, the group immediately turned their eyes onto the final incense stick.

This incense stick represented the fourth stage, as well as a grade-4 formation. If the other party succeeded in clearing the fourth stage as well, that would truly be fearsome.

A 4-star formation master who wasn't even twenty yet? More importantly, for him to break out of all those formation so swiftly, exactly how deep was his understanding of formations?

This was something they dared not imagine in the past.

Weng...

Just as they were harboring such thoughts, the fire on the fourth incense stick suddenly flickered, and for a moment, it looked as though it would extinguish at any moment. However, in the end, it stabilized and was reignited again.

"It didn't extinguish... It seems like that fellow didn't pass the fourth stage. I guess it's to be expected. After all, grade-4 formations aren't that easy to overcome!"

Seeing the flame on the fourth incense stick, it was clear that the person inside had failed to clear the challenge. Thus, Wang Haoxun shook his head.

The speed at which that fellow had cleared the stages had frightened him. He thought that the other party might be able to clear a grade-4 formation easily as well. However, from the looks of it, the other party hadn't reached such a level yet.

But that was to be expected. After all, even he couldn't guarantee that he could break every single kind of grade-4 formation, needless to say, a young fellow who wasn't even twenty yet.

If he were to succeed, that would be truly a miracle.

"But in any case, it is already formidable for him to become a 3-star formation master in his first examination..."

Guild Leader Zheng was slightly disappointed.

From the speed and acuity at which that fellow set up the grade-2 Spirit Gathering Formation, he thought that the other party's comprehension of formations wasn't beneath him. But it seemed like there was still some disparity between them after all.

Even so, given how he was able to reach 3-star at such a young age, as long as he were to work hard, it would just be a matter of time before he becomes a 4-star or even 5-star formation master.

"He didn't clear the fourth stage? Seems like... Zhang shi isn't omnipotent as well..."

Hall Master Sai stood behind the duo. After seeing that the fourth incense stick wasn't extinguished, he shook his head as well.

He thought that this fellow would cause a great chaos in the midst of challenging the Sea of Formations, just like how the other party did when he challenged the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets. However, it seemed like he was just worrying excessively.

At his age, it was already extremely incredible for the other party to be a master teacher and a 5-star appraiser. If the other party were to be a 4-star formation master on top of that, he might have to start doubting the meaning of life already...

Heaving a sigh of relief, he was just about to go to the corridor to wait for the young man when the ground suddenly shook.

Hong long long!

The sound of a millstone being turned reverberated in the air as though an earthquake.

"What happened?"

A grave expression immediately appeared on everyone's faces, and even Guild Leader Zheng's eyebrows were knitted together. The group started looking around warily.

Hu!

Suddenly, the warmth in the room vanished and a bone-chilling breeze of air blew in.

Kacha!

At that moment, the flame on the fourth incense stick suddenly extinguished... And soon afterward, with a crisp sound, the pot cracked open.

"This... The guild's Eternal Spring Formation which is sustaining the Sea of Formations has been... broken?"

Upon realizing something, Guild Leader Zheng's vision darkened and he nearly spurted a mouthful of blood.

Given that there were innumerable formations in the Sea of Formations, naturally, a larger formation had to be set up to control and manage them.

And this formation happened to be the Eternal Spring Formation which regulated the interior conditions of the Formation Master Guild.

Since the warmth had suddenly disappeared from the air and the incense pot suddenly cracked... There could only be one possibility. That was that the formation... had been stopped. In other words, someone had broken it!

But that was a grade-5 formation... Back then, the headquarters had sent specially sent an expert down here to set it up. Who could be possibly of achieving such a feat?

In an instant, a frenzied expression appeared on everyone's faces.

"Could it be... Zhang shi?"

With trembling bodies, a thought suddenly popped in Guild Leader Zheng and Hall Master Sai's minds.

The core of the formation was located in the depths of the Sea of Formations. At the current moment, that fellow, who was challenging the fourth stage of the Sea of Formations, was the closest to it... Other than him, they couldn't think of any other culprit.

"But if it was really him... How in the world did he manage to stop the formation?"

Guild Leader Zheng had a dazed expression on his face.

There were specific tricks to breaking a formation. What kind of trick did the other party use to be able to clear the stages so quickly, going to the extent as to be able to... break even a grade-5 formation?

Just as the group was overwhelmed with shock, a few figures walked out from the corridor. They were the three students who were supposed to challenge the Sea of Formations.

Given that the formation operating the corridor had been broken, there was no way for the examination go continue on. Thus, there was no point for them to remain there and so, they came out.

"What happened?" Wang Haoxun walked up and asked.

"That person who just entered... broke all of the formations..."

The senior shuddered as he spoke.

"Broke all of the formations? So fast?"

Guild Leader Zheng walked forward and asked, "How did he do it? Did he use Grandmaster Hong Bei's [Celestial Chasing Formation Breaking Art], Grandmaster Nan Yang's [Energy Seeking Formation Breaking Art], or the Five Element Formation Master Senior Sai Yang's [Force Accruing Formation Breaking Art]? Of all techniques I know, only these three can achieve such speed..."

"Ah... Guild leader!"

Seeing that the most authoritative person in the entire guild was questioning him personally, the senior was taken aback and his face paled. "Reporting to the guild leader, h-he didn't use any of the three techniques..."

"He didn't? Then what technique did he use? To the extent of my knowledge, these three are already the strongest and most formidable formation breaking techniques already

Guild Leader Zheng frowned.

Were there even stronger techniques that he was unaware of?

"What he used was..."

The senior's face distorted in frenzy and disbelief.

"... a kick!"

Chapter 485: Quasi 4-Star Formation Master

"A kick?"

Guild Leader Zheng and Wang Haoxun were taken aback. They were baffled. What kind of formation breaking technique was called 'a kick?'

"That's right. From the first stage to the fourth stage, before all of the formations, he simply kicked, and then... then... the formation simply stopped!" the senior said.

"A kick each? You mean that... he used a kick to break the formation?" Guild Leader Zheng and Wang Haoxun nearly spewed blood.

"Yes!"

The senior nodded his head.

The two great 4-star formation masters stared at one another.

"Yes? Yes your head!"

What kind of formation breaking technique is that? Do you think that makes sense?

"Senior is right! He simply kicked each of them to overcome the formations. The both of us saw it ourselves too..." Seeing the disbelief in the guild leader and their teacher's eyes, the two juniors immediately stepped forward to testify.

"Could it be that he was lucky such that the formations he met were some of the more basic and simpler?"

Since there were three people saying the same words, Wang Haoxun knew that it was unlikely to be a lie. Thus, he tried asking from another perspective.

In the Sea of Formations, the formation one triggered was completely random and so, luck played an important role in the examination. For the other party to pass all four stages so swiftly, could he have met with the weakest formations of each grade?

"Lucky?"

The trio's mouths twitched, "We've never met a person who is as unlucky as he is! In the first stage, he encountered the Cloud Ocean Confinement Formation, in the second, an Illusion Formation, in the third, the Qinghong Falling Petal Formation..."

"Cloud Ocean Confinement Formation? Illusion Formation?"

"Qinghong Falling Petal Formation?"

Just by hearing the formations the other party encountered in the first three stages, the two 4-star formation masters nearly fell to the ground.

Those were formations unparalleled in their respective grade! For a person to meet all of them in a single examination...

Are you for real? How unlucky must one be for that to happen?

...

More importantly, even though he met with those formations, he still managed to clear the stages so quickly? He even went to the extent of breaking the great formation sustaining the guild...

"What was the formation for the fourth stage then?" Guild Leader Zheng hurriedly asked.

Could the formation for the fourth stage be relatively easier?

"If I'm not wrong, it seemed to be the... [Drunken Heart Beguilement Slaughter Formation]!" the senior said.

"Drunken Heart Beguilement Slaughter Formation... The grade-4 pinnacle formation which fuses Beguilement Formation and Slaughter Formation together?" Guild Leader Zheng exclaimed in shock.

He thought that after the fellow was unlucky for the first three stages, his luck might get better in the fourth one. Who knew that he would meet with the worst of the lot!

That was definitely the most fearsome formation within the Sea of Formations.

Ordinary formations only took on one type—they were either Illusion Formation, Slaughter Formation, Beguilement Formation, or Confinement Formation... Under normal circumstances, there would be no overlap between the two. But this formation had complemented the two together in a very profound manner.

In other words, if one were to be trapped in it, one would first be beguiled before being... slaughtered.

Even Guild Leader Zheng had to admit that it would be difficult for him to survive if he were trapped in it. Yet, not only was the other party fine, he even broke the formation and went ahead... to get rid of the guild's main formation...

Did you have to be so extreme?

"Indeed. After stepping into the formation, his eyes were dazed for a moment so I thought that his mind might have succumbed to the formation. But in the end... with two consecutive kicks, the Drunken Heart Beguilement Slaughter Formation broke down and soon afterward... the great formation of the guild was stopped as well. Seeing that there was no way for the examination to continue on, we decided to just step out of the corridor..." the senior

explained.

"A grade-4 pinnacle formation and a grade-5 formation can be broken with a single kick?"

Guild Leader Zheng and Wang Haoxun felt as though their worldly horizons were crumbling down.

By the side, Hall Master Sai slapped his forehead.

He thought that Zhang shi would at least a little more reasonable here... But it seemed like he was too naive.

That fellow was just intent on causing trouble wherever he went!

While the crowd was overwhelmed with shock, the main character of the entire saga walked out from the corridor.

In truth, the current Zhang Xuan was slightly nervous.

The first three stages were extremely easy to him. Even without using the Library of Heaven's Path, with just a glance using the Eye of Insight, he could easily find the core of the formation and kick them to a stop. However, the final stage wasn't that easy.

A grade-4 pinnacle Beguilement and Slaughter Formation. If not for his Soul Depth having reached 12.0, the level equivalent to a 4-star master teacher, he would have surely lost his ability to think

rationally as soon as he stepped in and died from the formation.

At the crucial moment, he activated the strength of the Library of Heaven's Path and found a few flaws.

Knowing that it was too dangerous then, he didn't have the time to analyze the consequences of his actions so he immediately kicked the two formations to a halt.

"Seems like it'll be best for me not to trifle with grade-4 formations in the future..."

Remembering the previous experience, Zhang Xuan still felt a little fearful.

If not for his high Soul Depth, he would have been dead by now.

Since even a grade-4 formation was that scary, it was difficult to imagine how fearsome the higher tiered ones were.

Zhang Xuan thought that formations were nothing but a decoration to him especially since he could determine their flaws via the Eye of Insight and Library of Heaven's Path. However, he had just realized that his thinking was too naive.

The truly formidable formations would kill one before one could even react. No matter how capable one was and how many flaws in the formation one knew of, it would be for naught.

"Zhang shi, you... managed to break through all of the formations?"

Just as Zhang shi was preparing himself, he saw Guild Leader Zheng and Hall Master Sai walking over with a look of awe.

"I only stopped them temporarily!" Zhang Xuan shook his head.

Breaking a formation meant destroying the formation core. Under such circumstances, it would be difficult for the formation to work again. On the other hand, stopping a formation was different. A formation which had its operation stopped was just a formation that had been 'switched off'. One could still reactivate it after that.

To summarize, it was just the difference of whether the formation core had been destroyed or not.

Breaking a formation meant destroying the entire formation while stopping a formation meant using a unique method to stop its operation. Even though the effects were similar on the surface, there was a huge difference between the two.

"Stop?" Hearing those words, Guild Leader Zheng and the others heaved a long sigh of relief.

If he had really destroyed the Sea of Formations' strongest grade-4 formation and the guild's main formation, then he, as the guild

leader, would surely be held accountable.

After explaining the matter, Zhang Xuan asked, "Since I've managed to clear the Sea of Formations, can I be considered as an official formation master now?"

"May I know what cultivation realm is Zhang shi at..." Guild Leader Zheng asked.

"I'm at Half-Transcension... However, I should be able to reach Transcendent Mortal 1-dan within the next two days." Zhang Xuan replied.

Having compiled the Transcendent Mortal 1-dan of the Heaven's Path Divine Art, as long as he managed to find a Spirit Gathering Formation, he should be able to achieve a breakthrough very quickly.

"One has to possess at least the strength of a Transcendent Mortal 3-dan to apply for the rank of a 4-star formation master. Your cultivation is still lacking..."

Guild Leader Zheng frowned.

Just as he had deduced before, the young man before him hadn't even reached the Transcendent Mortal realm yet. Bestowing him the rank of a 4-star formation master wasn't quite possible.

As one of the occupations of the Upper Nine Paths, one of the

promotion criteria involved one's level of cultivation.

Without a sufficiently high cultivation realm to match up with the rank, it wasn't possible for the rank to be bestowed to one.

A moment later, Guild Leader Zheng said, "How about this? Zhang shi, I'll give you a quasi 4-star formation master emblem for the time being. At the same time, I'll report the matter to the headquarter and if they give their approval, there will be no problems giving you the rank of a 4-star formation master! But even if they do not approve the request, given your talents, you should be able to easily reach Transcendent Mortal 3-dan before thirty. By then, you will be automatically given the rank without having to take the examination again!"

"Quasi 4-star formation master?" Zhang Xuan was perplexed.

There was such a rank?

"Indeed. This is how the guild deals with individuals who were able to pass the 4-star formation master examination when their cultivation hasn't reached the required level yet! It's the same for most guilds as well. There are some occupations that don't have a requirement on one's cultivation realm and an emblem is bestowed straight after the candidate passes the examination, but those number in the minority," Guild Leader Zheng said.

Take the appraiser occupation for example. Right after Zhang Xuan passed the examination, he was given a 5-star emblem.

"Quasi 4-star formation master works for me too. Then... Can you give me the formation blueprint, flag, and core of a grade-4 Spirit Gathering Formation?"

The main reason why he took the formation master examination was for this. Since he was already a quasi 4-star formation master, he should be qualified to obtain them.

"Un, wait a moment!"

Seeing that the other party was asking for the items, Guild Leader Zheng shook his head with a bitter smile. He turned around to instruct Xiaowu and the latter left the room. Not too long later, the latter returned with a jade token, formation core, and flag in hand.

"This is the formation blueprint for a grade-4 Spirit Gathering Formation. You can record it down but make sure not to leak it out!"

Saying so, Guild Leader Zheng passed the jade token over.

Nodding his head, Zhang Xuan took the jade token and immersed his consciousness into it. A formation blueprint appeared in his mind, and it even described the various ways of setting it up when on the differing geographical terrain.

"Hm? Wait, this Spirit Gathering Formation can only extract spiritual energy from ten spirit stones at once?"

After reading the content and the introduction within, Zhang Xuan's expression showed slight disappointment.

The Spirit Gathering Formation was formidable, but it could only extract spiritual energy from ten spirit stones at once.

Ten was a huge number for others, but to Zhang Xuan... it was far too insufficient.

A single spirit stone would break within two breaths of his cultivation. Even though ten spirit stones could sustain him for a little longer, all in all, it was only twenty breaths. That wasn't really much of a difference from before.

In the end, he still had to keep switching spirit stones in the formation while attempting to achieve a breakthrough in his cultivation.

"To be capable of extracting spiritual energy from ten spirit stone at a once, this is already the most efficient Spirit Gathering Formation in our guild. It is enough to sustain even the cultivation of a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan expert. Is it still insufficient for Zhang shi?"

Guild Leader Zheng frowned.

A grade-4 Spirit Gathering Formation could already be considered as top-notch within Myriad Kingdom Alliance. If one's

cultivation hadn't reached the corresponding level, it would be very hard to set it up. If the other party still thought that it was insufficient, there was nothing he could do about it.

After hesitating for a moment, Zhang Xuan carefully asked, "Is there a formation... which can extract the spiritual energy from all of the spirit stones placed within, regardless of the quantity?"

He needed to expend an ocean worth of spirit stone to reach Transcendent Mortal 1-dan. If he could only use ten of them at once, he would surely waste a lot of time.

It would be best if he could put in all of the required spirit stones at a single go. In this way, he could focus his attention on cultivating.

It was just like the petrol tank of a car. If it was the size of a teacup, regardless of how many petrol stations there were on the way, one would be terribly inconvenienced. On the other hand, it would be much convenient if it was the size of a fish tank.

"No limits on the quantity?" Guild Leader Zheng's mouth twitched. "There is one but... that is a grade-5 Spirit Gathering Formation. Furthermore... I only have the formation blueprint. I don't have the formation flags and core!"

In Honghai City Formation Guild, the highest rank formation master, Guild Leader Zheng, was only at 4-star pinnacle. He wasn't capable of preparing a grade-5 formation so naturally, he didn't possess the materials required to set it up.

Besides, these items were exorbitant, and if one's rank hadn't reached the level yet, it would be difficult to obtain the items.

"Only the formation blueprint..."

A deep frown was etched on Zhang Xuan's forehead.

He'd spent the entire day reading books and taking the formation master examination. Did he really have no choice but to accept this insignificant Spirit Gathering Formation and cultivate slowly?

If that was really the case, then it was really darned!

Chapter 486: Imperial Jade Sword

Acknowledging Its Master

"Indeed!"

Guild Leader Zheng nodded his head, "This formation blueprint was left behind by a 5-star formation master back when the branch was first built. Otherwise, as a 4-star branch, even if we were to apply for a grade-5 formation blueprint from the headquarter, we might not necessarily be able to obtain it!"

The formation blueprints in the Formation Master Guild was as strictly regulated as the pill formulae in the Apothecary Guild. One was only allowed to access resources corresponding to one's current level. If one were to come into contact with advanced topics when one's capability hadn't reached the required level, it would only harm oneself.

As such, 4-star branches like the Honghai City Formation Guild was only qualified to collect grade-4 formation blueprints. If one wanted to access higher grade formation blueprints, one had to apply it from the headquarter and pay a certain price.

Besides, this was only limited to the more basic grade-5 formation blueprints. As for the more profound materials, one would only have access to it when visiting a higher tiered branch.

Given how just the formation blueprint was so tightly regulated already, no more needed to be said about formation core and flags.

"Do I really have to head to higher ranked Formation Master Guild?"

What in the world was this?

He spent an entire day here and it turned out that even though there was a grade-5 formation blueprint here, there wasn't formation flags and core to set it up. Was he supposed to build it out of thin air?

The higher the grade of a formation, the higher the demand of the quality of the two items. These were fundamental needs so there was no compromising over them... Was he supposed to head to the Blacksmith Guild to learn how to forge these items just over a Spirit Gathering Formation?

Putting aside how it would take up a lot of time, the Honghai City Blacksmith Guild might, due to its limited rank, be unable to access the corresponding information required, just like the Formation Master Guild. Besides, even if he could find the respective blueprints for the formation flag and core, it wasn't guaranteed whether he could find the required material for it to forge them.

Rubbing his glabella, Zhang Xuan was distressed.

He thought that buying a Spirit Gathering Formation would be an easy and joyful matter, and he would be done in a moment's time. In the end, he spent several hours and the problem still

wasn't solved yet.

"Actually... even without formation flags and core, it's not entirely impossible to set up a grade-5 formation!"

By the side, Elder Wang Haoxun seemed to have recalled something and interjected.

"Hm?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

Through the books he had read through, he knew that these two items were necessities to setting up a formation. These were the basic materials and there was no way to avoid them. Could it be possible that there was some secret method to go around it?

"You mean that..."

Guild Leader Zheng seemed to have thought of something as well and he quickly shook his head. "Are you joking with me? That's impossible to accomplish!"

"Why?" Seeing that the duo seemed to have an idea in mind, Zhang Xuan asked curiously.

"What he means is... inscribing a formation plate!"

Guild Leader Zheng smiled bitterly, "But inscribing a formation plate is even harder than setting up a formation. It'll be impossible

for one to succeed unless one reaches the level of a 5-star formation master!"

"Formation plate?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

Indeed! Why didn't he think of it?

The formation plate was a unique material that could substitute formation flags and core!

"On top of that, it'll be impossible to inscribe with it without a specialized carving knife. I once bought a blank formation plate from the Appraiser Hall and tried inscribing it myself. However, the surface was incredibly tough and ordinary blades couldn't even leave a mark on it. How is one supposed to inscribe on it like that?"

Guild Leader Zheng shook his head.

The higher the grade of a formation, the greater the requirement on the quality of the formation plate. If the formation plate was too weak, it could crumble even before the formation was triggered.

The carving knives in the guild were only suited for the use of 4-star formation master. Even though they had a 5-star blank formation plate, those knives were simply insufficient to inscribe anything on it, needless to say, draw out a formation.

"Can you bring the grade-5 Spirit Gathering Formation and

formation plate so that I can take a look? If I really can't think of any solution, I'll drop the matter!"

Even though Zhang Xuan knew that what the other party said was true, he wasn't willing to give up on this chance. Thus, he made the request.

"Alright!"

Seeing the other party's insistence, Guild Leader Zheng nodded. Flicking his wrist, a jade token and a blank formation plate appeared in his hands.

These two objects were the most valuable resources of the entire guild. As such, he carried them with him everywhere he went.

Grabbing hold of the jade token, Zhang Xuan immersed his consciousness into it.

Just like the grade-4 formation blueprint jade token from before, the grade-5 Spirit Gathering Formation blueprint was also extremely detailed. All kinds of demands were written clearly on it.

Zhang Xuan hurriedly remembered all of the details.

"It's indeed quite difficult to set up!"

Reorganizing the information in his mind, Zhang Xuan sighed.

Even though there was only a grade of difference between grade-5 and grade-4 formations, their difference was immense. If one's cultivation hadn't reached the required level, even if one had the formation flags and core, it would be very difficult to set it up properly.

It was just like pill forging. Even if a 1-star apothecary possessed the pill formula of higher grade pills, he would still be unable to suppress the violent energy within the cauldron to forge a grade-2 or grade-3 pill.

If the different ranks were so easy to overcome, there would be no need to create such a clear ranking system within the occupations.

"However, if I use the Library of Heaven's Path to find out the various errors and flaws in them, there's still a chance that I might succeed!"

With this cheat code, even though ordinary 4-star formation masters would be hard-pressed to prepare a formation of such a high grade, there was still a chance that Zhang Xuan might succeed.

Taking pill forging for example again, if there were no errors in the sequencing, one could easily guide a 1-star apothecary to forge a grade-2 pinnacle pill.

Similarly, as long as there was no error in his sequencing, with just his cultivation as a Half-Transcension cultivator, there was still a good chance he could set up a grade-5 Spirit Gathering Formation.

But... These were just thoughts. Without the required resources, there was nothing Zhang Xuan could do at all.

"I should take a look at the formation plate!"

Dumping aside those miscellaneous thoughts, Zhang Xuan took hold of the blank formation plate.

The formation plate was black and heavy. It was a little hard to tell what it was crafted from but if one were to only look at one of the surfaces, it resembled a smooth copper mirror.

"This is a carving knife. You can give it a try!"

Seeing that Zhang Xuan was still carrying some hope over the matter, Guild Leader Zheng whipped out a carving knife with a flick of his wrist and passed it over to him.

Grabbing hold of the knife, Zhang Xuan drove the zhenqi in his body and slit it across the smooth surface of the formation plate.

Jiya, jiya!

A screeching sound echoed. Even though the carving knife was sharp, it wasn't able to leave a single mark on the blank formation plate.

Zhang Xuan smiled bitterly.

It seemed like what the other party said was true. Given how the carving knife couldn't leave a mark on it at all, it was impossible to inscribe the formation on it.

"Flaws!"

Frustrated, Zhang Xuan muttered silently while holding the blank formation plate.

Hu!

A book appeared in the Library of Heaven's Path. He slowly opened it.

"Grade-5 blank formation plate. Crafted using Frigid Silver and Nine Inch Gold by 5-star Blacksmith Yang Shu. It is incomparably resilient, and only a Spirit high-tier carving knife or a Spirit intermediate-tier weapon paired with Weapon Intent can leave a mark on it. Flaws: ..."

Several flaws were detailed on the book.

Sweeping through them, Zhang Xuan realized that the flaws were beyond his current ability to exploit. Thus, he was preparing to put it down when he suddenly froze.

"A Spirit intermediate-tier weapon paired with Weapon Intent... can also leave a mark on it?"

A Spirit high-tier carving knife was a tool specially made for 5-star formation masters. As such, it was impossible to obtain it.

However...

Speaking of Spirit intermediate-tier weapons, some of the Transcendent Mortal 4-dan experts possessed them. Thus, it wasn't too difficult to find it in Honghai City. In fact, a lot of treasures that Hall Master Sai gathered were of that level.

As for Weapon Intent, given that Zhang Xuan had even comprehended Sword Heart already, it wasn't a problem at all!

The sharp edge that Weapon Intent provided was sufficient to make up for the deficiency in the quality of the weapon.

The more Zhang Xuan thought about it, the more he felt that it was possible. As such, with glowing eyes, Zhang Xuan raised his head and said, "I know how I can carve it now! Is there anyone of you who have a Spirit intermediate-tier sword? May I borrow it for a moment?"

"Spirit intermediate-tier sword?"

Guild Leader Zheng was taken aback. "I have one, what do you need it for?"

"I'll explain later, just lend it to me for a moment!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Alright then!"

Knowing that it was impossible for the other party to escape with his item, Guild Leader Zheng flicked his wrist and passed a sword over.

Grabbing over the sword, Zhang Xuan slowly drew it from its sheathe.

A cold gleam immediately reflected on Zhang Xuan's face. Even without infusing zhenqi into it, he could already feel overwhelming spiritual energy weighing down on him from it.

As expected of a Spirit intermediate-tier weapon. It was truly much stronger than the weapons he had used before.

Weng!

However, as soon as the sword was out of the sheathe, a spirit wave began pulsing out from the sword. The sword was trying to

struggle free out of his grasp.

A weapon of this tier also possessed its own spirit. It could acknowledge a master, and if someone who wasn't its master tried to wield it, it could possibly go berserk and even injure the wielder.

"I apologize. This sword has been with me for quite a long time so it's a little apprehensive of strangers. Allow me to talk to it for a moment..."

Seeing that the sword was on the verge of escaping at any moment, Guild Leader Zheng immediately walked up with a reddened face and stroked his finger on the blade of the sword, as though cajoling a lover. "Alright, Zhang shi needs your help for a moment so listen to him obediently!"

Weng!

Hearing Guild Leader Zheng speak up for Zhang Xuan's stead, the sword seemed to have suffered a great injustice and its trembling grew even more intense.

"Cough cough, don't worry. I'll try again..."

Embarrassed, Guild Leader Zheng continued to stroke the sword and attempted to placate it.

However, the sword didn't seem to be willing to give in at all. The more Guild Leader Zheng tried to persuade it, the more

violent its response.

"Old Zheng, you've owned this Imperial Jade Sword for a very long time already, but you haven't made it submit to you yet?" Hall Master Sai couldn't help but ask.

He was the one who sold the sword to the other party five years ago. He didn't expect that the other party hadn't won the acknowledgement of the sword yet.

Once a weapon acknowledged a master, it would respectfully listen to the commands of its master. In any case, it was impossible for it to react so violently.

"Cough cough, you know that the acknowledgement process is extremely complex. After accompanying it daily throughout the years, even eating and sleeping with it, the situation is already slightly better now. It's beginning to listen to my instructions now. Don't worry, give me an hour to talk to it, I guarantee you that there won't be any problems!"

Guild Leader Zheng smiled awkwardly.

There was no secret to making a Spirit weapon acknowledge one; one had to accompany it daily and temper it with one's zhenqi.

The Imperial Jade Sword had been with him for nearly five years now, and the spirit was on the verge of recognizing him already. Even though he was still a long way off from achieving an

acknowledgement, the relationship of the two of them was already intimate. If he were to talk to it, it would still listen to his words.

"An hour is a bit too long. Pass me your sword!"

Hearing that it would take so long to calm down a Spirit intermediate-tier weapon, Zhang Xuan shook his head.

"Pass it to you?" Guild Leader Zheng was taken aback. "Do you have an idea in mind?"

Unwilling to waste his time on words, Zhang Xuan created a loop with his thumb and middle finger, and he struck the sword on its tip, blade, and hilt.

Hu! Hu!

It was as though the sword had met something that had terrified it greatly, and it began to tremble violently.

With a darkened complexion, Zhang Xuan berated, "You'd better stay put obediently. If you were to cause any more ruckus, I'll cripple you!"

Weng!

Upon hearing those words, the sword immediately stopped its actions. Then, a sound reminiscent to the chiming of a bell

sounded, reverberating straight within one's soul.

"Spirit Euphoria..."

Guild Leader Zheng's body froze and his eyeballs nearly popped out from their sockets. "The Imperial Jade Sword has acknowledged him as its master? Th-this... What in the world happened?"

Chapter 487: Does Anyone Have a Saber?

The sword had accompanied him for five whole years, and the time he spent with it was even more than that of his own wife. Even so, he was still unable to fully tame it yet. On the other hand, the young man before him had only bellowed at it and it immediately produced Spirit Euphoria...

Euphoria your head!

Could you be even more shameless than that?

I treated you as though you were my ancestor and not only did you not know gratitude, you even dumped me for someone else, acknowledging someone else as your master...

Guild Leader Zheng felt as though his heart was being torn apart by countless blades. His chest felt so stifled that he could spurt blood at any moment.

His entire face had turned green.

What the heck was this?

Could it be that he had to use forceful measures on this sword to force it into submission?

Seeing the awful complexion on his old friend, Hall Master Sai

slapped his forehead.

This was an overpowered appraiser who could even make the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets acknowledge him. Wasn't earning the acknowledgement of the Imperial Jade Sword a walk in the park for him?

"Zhang shi is just borrowing your sword, he doesn't intend to take it away..."

Fearful that his old friend might pass out at this rate, he hurriedly sent a telepathic message over.

"Un..."

Only after hearing those words did Guild Leader Zheng finally calm down. He suppressed the urge to spurt blood and turned to look at the young man as a sliver of doubt rose within him.

"Wasn't he going to inscribe on the formation plate? Why is he borrowing a sword?"

The other party had declared that he was going to try inscribing on the formation plate so why in the world did he make the sword acknowledge him?

"It's to inscribe the formation plate!" Grabbing the grade-5 blank formation plate, Zhang Xuan flung his hand.

Peng!

The formation plate lodged itself onto the wall not too far away as though a mirror nailed onto a wall.

After securing the formation plate well, Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up and a ferocious might gushed out from him. Flicking his sword, a radiant aura shrouded it.

"Sword Intent... Sword Heart?"

Hearing the crisp buzz of the sword, Guild Leader Zheng narrowed his eyes.

Despite being a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan expert, he hadn't comprehend Sword Heart yet. To think that a fellow who wasn't even twenty yet would have reached such a level. Appraising, formation, and now Sword Heart... What in the world was he incapable of?

"Weapon Intent is incomparably sharp, and the might of a Spirit weapon infused with it can be brought up by a notch... It can't be that you intend to use the sword to inscribe the formation?"

As the thought arose in his mind, Guild Leader Zheng nearly choked on his own saliva.

A grade-5 formation plate could only be inscribed on by a Spirit high-tier inscribing knife. However, a tool of that level couldn't be found in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance... This fellow couldn't possibly be thinking of complementing the sword with Weapon Intent to replace it...!

It was easy to make mistakes during the inscribing process even with something as light and small as the inscribing knife. To use a sword directly...

Are you here to play around?

Using a sword to inscribe a formation... Putting aside whether I've seen it before, I haven't even heard of such a thing before!

You must be pulling my leg!

"Using a sword to inscribe a formation?" Hall Master Sai and Wang Haoxun's vision also darkened.

This was no longer about being brazen, this was insanity!

One might be able to wield a sword with astounding dexterity, but to use a three chi (ten meters) long sword to inscribe marks that were countless times thinner than a strand of hair... How in the world did such a ridiculous notion even appear in his mind?

Ding ding ding ding!

But before he could recover from the young man's actions, a metallic sound coming from the contact between the sword tip and the formation plate sounded.

Slowly, a thin mark appeared on the surface of the smooth formation plate.

"It's really possible?"

His vision went dark again.

What kind of monster was this?

To be able to draw formation marks with a sword... Exactly how adept was he with a sword?

"To think that I often make mistakes even when using a carving knife..."

Wang Haoxun's lips trembled non-stop.

Even as a 4-star formation master, he still often made mistakes while inscribing on a formation plate. Yet, the other party was using a sword, which meant that he had to inscribe from a distance of three chi away...

Must you be so exaggerated?!

"It's workable!"

Contrary to everyone's shock, upon seeing the formation marks appear on the blank formation plate, Zhang Xuan's eyes gradually grew brighter and brighter.

He had only thought of complementing the sword with Sword Intent to do the inscribing on a whim so he didn't really give much of an expectation for it.

Driving his Soul Depth to the limit, his Eye of Insight flickered as he measured the various imperceptible bumps and depressions on the formation plate. Holding the sword tightly, he strictly followed the method detailed in the Heaven's Path Formation Art to inscribe the formation on the plate.

If a master teacher were here, he would definitely realize that Zhang Xuan had reached a unique state at the moment...
Vanquishing Facade, Lucid Mind!

Lucid Analytical realm!

After the State of Mind 2-dan Heart of Tranquil Water was this Lucid Analytical realm.

Knowledge was omnipresent, only waiting to be analyzed!

At this realm, one would be able to peer through chaos to see the crux. At the same time, with a clearer mind, one's analytical power would grow substantially stronger.

Paired with the Eye of Insight, Zhang Xuan was able to inscribe the formation marks orderly, unaffected by any disturbances or emotions.

Other formation masters had to use a carving knife to inscribe the thin formation marks but Zhang Xuan could do the same with a sword. While the Heaven's Path Formation Art played a part in that, what played a more significant role was this ability unique to only master teachers.

"To use a sword to inscribe a formation plate... It's no wonder why he can break formations with a single kick. Who in the world is this expert?"

By the side, the senior, juniors, and others were so shocked that their hearts were about to stop beating.

Other people had to use carving knives to complete the delicate actions, but this fellow went on to use a sword instead. What left them even more frenzied was that he was able to do it as exquisitely as others... Even when witnessing it with their own eyes, they still found the entire sight incredulous.

Ding ding ding ding!

After an unknown period of time, Zhang Xuan retracted his sword and came to a halt. Then, he began to pant heavily.

"Sword Intent is an actualization of one's concentration. It's very easy for one to get exhausted by maintaining the state for a long time, not to mention, when doing such a delicate job!"

Upon seeing his state, Guild Leader Zheng tried to persuade him. "There's no need to hurry. A formation plate isn't something that can be inscribed completely within a day. You should take your time!"

Sword Intent represented a cultivator's comprehension toward swordsmanship. Activating it for a short period of time was still manageable, but even with Zhang Xuan's pure Heaven's Path zhenqi, maintaining it for an extended period of time wasn't too possible.

"Un..."

Nodding his head, Zhang Xuan began recuperating for a moment. He stared at the formation plate fixed on the wall with a grim expression.

Even though his comprehension of Sword Intent had already reached the level of Sword Heart, he was still unable to maintain that state for extended periods of time. In just a short moment, he already found himself on the verge of collapsing.

If he were to forcefully continue on, he might possibly wreck his previous efforts due to his unstable condition.

"If Sword Intent is a bottle filled with water, if it were to be poured out, there will come a point at which it will run dry."

Frowning, Zhang Xuan fell into contemplation. "I'm already dried out at the moment but the formation plate isn't even halfway there yet... It'll at least take a day or two of recuperation for my Sword Intent to recover..."

Sword Intent was similar to zhenqi. There was a limit to how much one could use it at a moment, and if one were to use it repeatedly, one would find himself sapped dry.

And that was exactly what Zhang Xuan's current state was. Even so, the formation plate in front of him wasn't even half done yet.

What should he do?

Did he have to slowly complete it over a course of few days, just as the other party said?

If Guild Leader Zheng were to learn of his thoughts, he would surely think that the world had gone mad.

Even 5-star formation masters would require several days to inscribe such a high grade formation plate with a carving knife. With a sword in hand, the other party still expects to finish it

swiftly... Wasn't this clearly daydreaming?

Just as Zhang Xuan was conflicted over the next course of action, his eyes suddenly lit up.

On top of Sword Intent, he had comprehended Saber Intent as well.

"Right! Since I can inscribe it with Sword Intent, Saber Intent should work as well! Even though my Sword Intent is sapped dry at the moment, my Saber Intent is still at its capacity..."

Having learned Heaven's Path Saber Art before, his grasp over sabers had reached an incredibly high level of mastery.

Even though he couldn't activate his Sword Intent anymore, he hadn't expended his Saber Intent yet. It was still a full bottle ready to be used at his disposal.

Chuckling lightly, he stood up and surveyed the surroundings. "Does anyone have a Spirit intermediate-tier saber here?"

Even though it was possible to utilize Saber Intent through a sword as well, due to the differing nature of the two swords, the might and accuracy of his movements might take a toll. There was no need for Zhang Xuan to take such a risk.

"Saber?"

Stars appeared above everyone's head.

Aren't you using a sword to inscribe the formation plate? Why do you need a saber?"

"I have one here..."

After a moment of hesitation, Hall Master Sai flicked his wrist and a [nine-ringed saber](#) appeared in his palm. It was heavy and ferocious, and one could feel a violent disposition from it.

"Allow me to borrow it for a moment!"

Walking forward, Zhang Xuan grabbed the saber and flicked it lightly. A sound similar to the call of a dragon echoed.

"Good saber!"

From that, it was clear that the saber was a formidable Spirit weapon. It wasn't inferior to the Imperial Jade Sword at all.

"I'll return you the sword first!"

With a saber in hand now, Zhang Xuan tossed the sword that he borrowed back to Guild Leader Zheng.

Even though the weapon had acknowledged him as its master, he had stated clearly before he was just borrowing it. Since that was the case, he had no thoughts of claiming it for himself.

Besides, he didn't have much of an expectation for his weapon. Even though the Imperial Jade Sword was excellent, he didn't possess any greed for it.

And if he really needed one, he could always buy one for himself.

If he had harbored such thoughts, he would have long carried the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets away with him. There would be no need for him to negotiate with the Appraiser Hall and let them off.

"This..."

Catching the sword, Guild Leader Zheng's face turned red in embarrassment.

Spirit artifacts possessed consciousness, and usually, if the spirit chose to acknowledge another master, even if the original owner was reluctant to do so, most would still choose to part with it.

After all, if one were to forcefully attempt to retain control over the weapon, not only would one be unable to earn the acknowledgement of the spirit, one might even incur its hostility.

There was no use keeping a sword that was hostile to one. Since

that was the case, one might as well sell the other party a favor. Perhaps, one might even get a good price for it.

Thus, he thought that after Zhang shi had induced Spirit Euphoria in the Imperial Jade Sword, he would have to bid the sword goodbye. Yet... the other party simply returned it back to him, showing no signs of wanting to claim it for his own.

"Zhang shi, you seem to be fated with this Imperial Jade Sword given how easily you induced Spirit Euphoria in it! Such compatibility between a weapon and a human is extremely rare, and these encounters usually end up going on to become legends.

"I've owned this sword for nearly five years now but still, I'm unable to get its spirit to submit to me. Since that's the case, I might as well just gift it to you and fulfill the both of you..."

Gritting his teeth, Guild Leader Zheng presented the sword back to Zhang Xuan.

No one could easily part with a companion who had accompanied one over a span of five years. However, this sword had already chosen its master, and there was no use keeping it to himself. Thus, he might as well extend his generosity to the other party.

After finishing his piece, he thought the other party would immediately take the sword away. However, contrary to his expectations, there was no movement at all. Lifting his head, it seemed like that Zhang shi hadn't been listening to his words. Rather, he was tapping his fingers on several points on the nine-

ringed saber that he just grabbed.

Weng!

A crisp call echoed from the saber.

Guild Leader Zheng's lips turned white and his hands trembled. He nearly threw his sword aside out of agitation.

"Spirit Euphoria... This saber... has acknowledged him as its master as well?"

It's actually a real type of weapon in Chinese history, a pretty common one at that. The unique trait of the sword is that it has nine rings aligned to one end of its blade (Note that the body of a saber tends to be rather large). It's said to allow you greater ease in controlling the trajectory of the sword by manipulating the center of gravity. Depending on your age, some of the weaker elderly might opt to go for six rings or three rings.

Chapter 488: Self-Activating Sentient Formation Plate

He had just said that Spirit Euphoria was extremely rare, and encounters like the one a moment ago would tend to go on and become a legend. Yet, at the very next moment, this saber came and did the same as well. Were they so eager to find a master for themselves?

You all are Spirit weapons! You're supposed to have your own consciousness and pride, and not submit to anyone easily... When did you all become so easy to deal with?

If you are so easy to deal with, then what do the five years that I spent wiping the Imperial Jade Sword and nourishing it with my zhenqi count as?

Guild Leader Zheng felt faint-headed. He was just about to continue speaking when in front of him, Zhang shi flicked his wrist and a burst of aura shot forth from the saber. Then, grabbing the saber tightly, he hacked it straight toward the formation plate.

"Be careful!"

Guild Leader Zheng was taken aback. However, before he could finish his words, his words abruptly stopped.

Unlike what he imagined, the powerful saber qi didn't tear apart the formation plate. Rather, it left strokes and strokes of formation

marks on it.

The other party was actually using a saber... to inscribe formation marks!

While most Transcendent Mortal experts hadn't even comprehended a single Weapon Intent, he had actually comprehended two already...

Just this sight in itself was enough to send him into a frenzy.

Your swordsmanship is light and adept, allowing you to use it in replacement of a carving knife to inscribe the formation marks. Fine, I admit that you possess incredible mastery so I'll accept it...

But sabers are heavy and bulky, especially nine-ringed sabers. That one in your hand definitely weighs at least several dozen kilograms. Ordinary men would find it tiring just to lift it, but to use it to inscribe formation marks...

How in the world are you doing it?

Can formation marks be inscribed like that?

Guild Leader Zheng's vision turned dark and his body trembled in agitation.

He had studied formations for more than eighty years now and

he had always thought that his aptitude was above average, especially when it came to inscribing formation plates. However, after seeing the other party's actions, he realized that he was sorely mistaken.

Since his talent was great, could he use swords to inscribe formation marks?

Could he use the bulky sabers to inscribe formation marks?

Clearly, not!

That was a thought he dared not harbor at all.

Ding ding ding ding!

As the saber came into contact with the formation plate, the number of marks on the originally mirror-like surface increased swiftly.

Just as Guild Leader Zheng thought that the other party would complete the inscription process in a single breath, the other party tossed aside the saber in his hand, wiped the sweat off his forehead and looked over expectantly, "Does anyone have a spear?"

"..." The crowd.

A moment later, holding onto a spear, the young man stood at a

distance four meters away as he brushed the tip of the spear on the formation plate on the wall.

Peng peng peng!

The spear moved swiftly, and just like with the sword and saber previously, formation marks swiftly appeared on the formation plate...

Grabbing onto their chests, Guild Leader Zheng and Wang Haoxun stared at one another.

Even when using carving knives, the both of them had to inscribe the marks slowly for fear of making an error. Yet, this fellow used a sword, saber, and now he was going to the extent of even using a spear... If he couldn't complete it with this spear, would he use a hammer next?

All of the formation masters that they knew of inscribed every stroke on a formation plate carefully as though a piece of art, fearful that it might break if with they were to use excessive strength. Yet, the other party went to the extent of using weapons on it...

Even though they were witnessing the sight for themselves, they still felt as though they were going mad.

Some of the crowd clutched onto their chests while some covered their mouths as they witnessed the astonishing sight.

In the meantime, Zhang Xuan was still currently immersed in his work. Having consecutively used the Weapon Intent of three different weapons, even though he was left on the verge spewing blood, what was fortunate was that the formation plate he was working on was about to be completed.

"The final stroke..."

With glowing eyes, he flicked his spear and drew out an elegant arc at the very center of the formation plate.

Hong long!

Carrying immense strength, the spear struck the surface of the formation plate and a deafening rumbling sound echoed.

The wall behind the formation plate was no longer able to withstand the immense pressure anymore and collapsed, leaving behind a gaping hole in its wake.

Zhang Xuan had fixed the formation plate on the wall to etch the inscription. Even though the formation plate wouldn't be damaged due to its toughness, the same didn't apply for the wall. Even though the Formation Master Guild had used the best Green Steel Boulder as the foundation for the building, it was still insufficient to withstand the relentless rampaging might of the sword, saber, and spear.

The corridor which the guild used to conduct the formation master examination collapsed and dust rose up from the surface, choking the surrounding crowd.

"Cough cough..."

Looking at the ruins before him, the ashen-faced Guild Leader Zheng's mouth twitched.

Are you here to take the formation master examination or are you here to demolish the place?

You first stopped the main formation of our guild before going ahead to destroy the walls...

What the heck was this? What kind of grudge does our Formation Master Guild have with you?

"Is the formation plate still intact?"

Hall Master Sai hurried forward.

Hearing those words, everyone suddenly recalled the matter and turned their gazes over.

Given how even the infrastructure had collapsed, would the formation plate still be fine?

"I have no idea!"

Zhang Xuan scratched his head. Hurrying forward, he quickly retrieved the round plate that was crushed under a thick layer of wreckage.

He wasn't being humble by saying those words, he really had no idea whether the formation plate was still fine or not.

Under normal circumstances, when he finished the final stroke on the formation plate, the formation should have been completed... However, he couldn't have expected the wall to crumble.

As such, it was hard to tell whether there was any deviation in his final stroke or not. There was a possibility that the might of the formation might be significantly reduced with this error.

He lowered his head to examine the formation plate.

On the smooth surface of the formation plate, innumerable strokes of differing depths could be seen. It looked like an eight trigrams formation, yet at the same time, it seemed to harness the laws of the world within it. With just a single look, one couldn't help but feel faint-headed.

"How is it?" Guild Leader Zheng asked anxiously.

If a formation plate wasn't activated, it was hard to tell just by

the formation marks itself whether it was a successful work or not.

"Let me give it a try!" Zhang Xuan replied.

Knowing this logic, he placed his palm on it and infused his zhenqi in.

Hu hu!

Nothing.

"A failure?"

Everyone's face paled.

A completed formation plate should be instantaneously activated as soon as zhenqi was infused into it. Given that nothing happened at all, it could only mean that... the formation plate was a failure!

There was only this grade-5 blank formation plate in the guild. After going through so much trouble, going to the extent of using sword, saber, and spear intent, he still ended up in failure...

Everyone looked at Zhang Xuan in sympathy.

"In the end, the might of those weapons was still way too great. Even though you curbed their strength, it's still unsuitable to use

them to inscribe a formation plate..." Wang Haoxun shook his head.

It wasn't without reason why everyone chose to use carving knife to inscribe a formation plate. No matter how well one's control over his spear, sword, or saber was, it was still a weapon crafted for destruction. It was inevitable that it would damage the formation plate so Zhang Xuan's failure wasn't too unexpected.

At that moment, Guild Leader Zheng suddenly shook his head.

"No, that's not it. If it's a failure, the formation plate should crumble. However, it is still intact and the spiritual energy within it is still flowing smoothly. Clearly, it isn't damaged at all!"

"Ah?"

Wang Haoxun was taken aback.

What the other party said was true.

A formation plate was, in essence, the miniaturization of a massive formation into a palm-sized round plate. As such massive energy was being condensed into such a small area, the slightest mistake would result in the plate breaking into innumerable fragments upon activation.

But, even though the formation plate in front of them wasn't activated, the marks were still glowing as zhenqi flowed through

it. There weren't any signs of the energy within going berserk as well. What was going on?

If it was a success, why couldn't it be activated?

But if it was a failure, how could it still be intact?

"Could the formation have been inscribed incorrectly? The spiritual energy gathering nature of the formation isn't working and that's why it is still intact?" Wang Haoxun asked.

"Inscribed wrongly? That's impossible!" Zhang Xuan shook his head.

He had followed the blueprint strictly and even used the inscribing method within the Heaven's Path Formation Art for it. Even if he had made an error in his final stroke, it shouldn't have deviated too much from its original intention.

Just as Zhang Xuan was about to use the Library of Heaven's Path to get to the bottom of the matter, Hall Master Sai's lips suddenly trembled as he walked forward.

"Can you allow me... to take a look?"

"Feel free!"

Seeing the other party's reaction, Zhang Xuan was slightly

bewildered. Even so, he passed the formation plate over.

The reason why Zhang Xuan managed to become a 5-star appraiser was mainly due to the help of the Library of Heaven's Path. In terms of understanding of artifacts, he was most probably still inferior to the other party.

Hall Master Sai had immersed himself in the world of appraising for more than several decades by now. Even though he might not know much about formations, his intuition and eye of discernment still made his judgement a valuable one.

The other party placed the formation plate on his palm.

Hu!

Before Hall Master Sai could take a closer look, the weight on his palm suddenly disappeared. The formation plate released a light buzz before flying back into Zhang Xuan's embrace.

"As I expected... As I expected!"

With a reddened face, Hall Master Sai's body trembled uncontrollably.

Seeing the other party's response, as though having realized something, Guild Leader Zheng couldn't rein in his curiosity any longer and hurriedly asked, "What's wrong?"

"Is this formation plate a failure?" Wang Haoxun asked as well.

"Failure?" Taking a deep breath, Hall Master Sai calmed himself down and shook his head. "How could that be possible?!"

"Then..." Everyone blinked in bewilderment. Even Zhang Xuan was unable to comprehend the situation before him.

If it was a success, why was he unable to activate it with zhenqi?

"Didn't you all see the formation plate leaving my hand on its own accord? Do you all still not understand it?"

Hall Master Sai spoke in agitation, "This... is clearly the reaction of a sentient tool. It has assessed me to be unsuitable, that's why it chose to leave..."

"Sentient? You mean... [Self-Activating Sentient Formation Plate]? This, this, this..."

Guild Leader Zheng had to say 'this' consecutively three times before he could bring himself back to reality. His eyes were widened and his body had stiffened. It was as though he had seen a ghost! "That is the ability that only a grade-6 formation plate should have! How can a grade-5 formation plate achieve such a feat?"

"Sentient formation plate?" Wang Haoxun also trembled in shock. He hurriedly turned his gaze to the formation plate in Zhang Xuan's hand.

The more he looked at it, the paler his face became. It seemed as though he would turn insane at any moment out of immense disbelief.

"What... is going on?"

Seeing the frenzied look on everyone's faces, Zhang Xuan was baffled.

Even though he had collected all of the books in the library of the Formation Master Guild, and he had studied the Heaven's Path Formation Art as well, he hadn't assimilated them yet. Thus, he was still unaware of much of the jargon that formation masters used.

"This... it means that the formation plate has gained spirit!" Guild Leader Zheng said with a quivering voice.

"Spirit? That does seem to be the case, but does it make a difference?" Zhang Xuan asked.

Only when the other party spoke about it did he realize that it was indeed the case.

Just like the Imperial Jade Sword, saber, and spear from before,

this formation plate seemed to have sprouted its own spirit. However, as Zhang Xuan had only just crafted it, he'd failed to notice the matter.

"Due to the size limitation and inability to harmonize entirely with the environment, ordinary formation plates could only display half of the strength of a normal formation. If the formation master inscribing it is lacking in proficiency, the ratio might go even lower."

Noticing Zhang Xuan's doubt, Guild Leader Zheng began to explain.

Zhang Xuan nodded his head, indicating that he knew about it.

When he was reading through the books previously, he had learned about the unique nature of formation plates so he wasn't too surprised over it.

"However... this nature only applies to ordinary formation plates. Sentient formation plates don't obey that law!"

With a flushed face, Guild Leader Zheng continued, "Not only can sentient formation plates bring out ninety percent of the strength of the formation, it could even grow stronger over time!"

"In fact... even without infusing zhenqi into it, it can activate by itself!"

Chapter 489: Huanyu Empire

A formation plate that possessed spirit wasn't only strong, it was also capable of absorbing spiritual energy to grow. More importantly, even without the zhenqi of a cultivator, it could activate by itself.

Even though self-activation didn't sound like a big deal, it could prove to be useful in desperate situations.

For example, if a person was under immense danger and wasn't in the condition to come into contact with the formation plate, a Spirit tool like this could potentially save one's life.

Thus, a sentient formation plate was one of the most sought after protective measures of cultivators.

However, only 6-star formation masters had the ability to create them. Furthermore, luck played a huge role as to whether an inscription would create a sentient formation plate or not.

Given the rarity of the object, he had only heard of it from rumors. As such, he didn't consider this possibility right from the start.

In fact, even after Hall Master Sai confirmed it, he still found it hard to believe that the young man before him could inscribe a sentient formation plate.

And more importantly, it was with a saber, a sword, and a spear! Who could have thought that those weapons could be used to inscribe formation plates as well?

Recovering from the shock, Guild Master Zheng turned to look at Zhang Shi and sighed.

To think that he had thought that his capability was at least on par with the other party previously...

At this moment, he realized that there were unfair existences in this world known as 'geniuses'. As soon as they made a move, one would only find themselves being left in the dust.

To overcome five formations in just a few minutes, and stop the main formation maintaining the guild on top of that.

To create a sentient formation plate using sword, saber, and spear...

If it wasn't clear that his cultivation hadn't reached Transcendent Mortal yet, he would have thought that a 6-star formation master was going through all this trouble just to prank him.

Disregarding the other party's shock, Zhang Xuan asked, "You mean that this object can activate on its own accord?"

"That's right. After one earns its acknowledgement, one will be able to communicate with it telepathically to activate the

formation. There's no zhenqi required in the process at all!" Guild Leader Zheng nodded.

"That's great!"

Hearing that it wasn't a failure in the inscribing process, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief. Touching the formation plate lightly, he could somehow feel an overjoyed feeling being transmitted to him.

Given that the formation plate was carved using the inscribing method detailed in the Heaven's Path Formation Plate, and he had utilized Sword Intent, Saber Intent, and Spear Intent just for it, he would find it hard to believe if the formation plate was ordinary.

"Acknowledge!"

Dripping a droplet of fresh blood on it, he found a communication bridge being slowly formed between him and the spirit of the formation plate.

"Activate!"

With a casual throw, the formation plate immediately activated in midair. The spiritual energy within the range of several thousand meter came gushing in as though a whirlpool was pulling them in. Due to the intensity of the attraction, a slight moaning sound reminiscent of frenzied wind being blown past a cave could be heard.

"Strong..."

Seeing the rate at which spiritual energy in the surroundings was being pulled in, everyone was taken aback.

As expected of a grade-5 formation. Its might was indeed fearsome.

Even though they weren't in the formation, they could still sense the overwhelming concentration of the spiritual energy within. It was at least three times that of the external surroundings!

If one were to cultivate within it, one's rate of cultivation would definitely be increased by several folds.

Furthermore, a sentient formation plate possessed the ability to repair its own damages. As long as one didn't use it too frequently or cause irreparable damage to it, there wasn't any limits on its usage.

"Not bad!"

Sensing that the might of the formation was similar to that described in the blueprint, Zhang Xuan nodded his head in satisfaction. Grabbing forward, he put away the formation plate and turned to the elder not too far away.

"Guild Leader Zheng, may I know the price of this blank formation plate?"

The sword, saber, and spear that Zhang Xuan used for the inscribing process were borrowed so he just had to return it. However, this blank formation plate was bought by the other party but he was now claiming it for his own. Naturally, it was only right for him to ask for the price to compensate the other party.

"Zhang shi, there's no need to worry about it. The formation plate is useless with me anyway so just consider it as a gift from my part..."

Guild Leader Zheng hurriedly turned down the matter.

The young man before him was a person who was capable of inscribing a sentient formation plate. Given his young age, it was likely the other party would go on and accomplish great things in the future. Thus, Guild Leader Zheng wanted to make use of this opportunity to strike up an amiable relationship with the other party.

"A gift?"

Frowning, Zhang Xuan shook his head, "It's not right for me to accept a gift when I haven't done anything deserving of it. How about this, since you haven't earned the acknowledgement of the Imperial Jade Sword yet, I'll give you a hand in it. This can count as compensation for the formation plate!"

Accepting the favor of another meant to be tied in a karmic relationship with the other party. This burden was a little heavy to bear.

"You'll give me a hand in earning the acknowledgement of the Imperial Jade Sword? It's possible... to help other people earn the acknowledgement of Spirit equipment?"

Guild Leader Zheng was taken aback.

Earning the acknowledgement of a sword concerns one's intimacy with one's weapon. To succeed, one had to spend time with it so as to tighten their bonds... Cough cough, it's possible to help one in that?

Why does it sound as though you are helping someone consummate their marriage?

"Of course!" With a faint smile, Zhang Xuan stretched his hand forward, grabbed the Imperial Jade Sword from his hand, and stroked it gently.

"The Imperial Jade Sword has already acknowledged you as its master so how can it possibly accept me?"

Thinking that it was impossible, Guild Leader Zheng shook his head.

"Don't worry, Zhang shi is a 5-star appraiser. Since he says that

he can make the Imperial Jade Sword acknowledge you, he must have an idea in mind!" Seeing the disbelief in his old friend's mind, Hall Master Sai stroked his beard and said.

His trust in the Zhang shi's capability was nearly unconditional at this point.

In his view, as long as the other party said that it was possible, it had to be possible. It was almost at the level of blind admiration already.

"An idea in mind..."

Seeing the confident expression of his old friend and recalling the various astounding deeds that the other party had done, Guild Leader Zheng was suddenly filled with hope.

Just as he was curious to see what kind of astounding means would this legendary figure use, the other party's cold, harsh voice sounded.

"You'd better acknowledge Guild Leader Zheng as your master and listen to him obediently. Otherwise, you know that I can cripple you within seconds, right?"

"Cough cough!"

Guild Leader Zheng and Hall Master Sai choked on their saliva. Their faces turned green and they nearly burst into tears on the

spot.

They were curious to know what means the other party would use but to think that it would be a threat!

Do you not know that all Spirit equipment are incomparably arrogant, and the one thing they do not fear are threats?

To cripple the equipment within seconds... If it operated the same as a human, he wouldn't have been put into such a difficult situation in the first place.

Why did this young man feel unfathomable as though an incredible expert in one moment and a naive amateur in the next...

"Zhang shi..."

Suppressing his dismal, Guild Leader Zheng shook his head. He was just about to advise the other party to not waste his effort when he heard a 'wuuu' sound. The Imperial Jade Sword suddenly flew toward him.

Hurriedly catching it, he immediately felt the Spirit Euphoria within it. Clearly... the sword was acknowledging him as its master.

"..."

Guild Leader Zheng went into a frenzy.

What was with this?

If the other party's 'I'll cripple you within seconds' actually worked, then what did his five years count for...

If it was under normal circumstances, he would surely dance in joy upon seeing that the sword which he had been keeping beside him for numerous years was acknowledging him. But somehow, in the current situation, he didn't feel the slightest delight. Instead, he felt so stifled that he could spurt blood.

"It looks like I shouldn't be so gentle when trying to win the acknowledgement of Spirit weapons in the future. Seems like callousness is the way to go..."

Dripping his blood on the Imperial Jade Sword to seal the relationship, Guild Leader Zheng reflected on his own mistakes.

"I still have something to attend to so I'll be taking my leave now!"

Having repaid the debt of the blank formation plate, Zhang Xuan clasped his fist and bade farewell.

His purpose at the Formation Master Guild was to find a Spirit Gathering Formation. Since he had already succeeded, it was time for him to return to raise his cultivation.

"Farewell!"

Guild Leader Zheng nodded his head.

Watching the young man and Hall Master Sai leaving without any hesitation, Wang Haoxun stepped forward and asked Guild Leader Zheng, "What kind of person... is this Zhang shi?"

"I've no idea as well. However... this matter has to be reported to the headquarters. The other party isn't even a Transcendent Mortal yet, but he was able to use a sword, saber, and spear to inscribe a sentient formation plate..."

Recalling the other party's actions, Guild Leader Zheng's mouth twitched uncontrollably.

"That's right, we have to report it immediately!" Wang Haoxun nodded in agreement.

Since the other party had taken the formation master examination in their branch, he could be considered as one of their members. If they were to report this, the headquarters would surely reward them handsomely. The resources obtained from the reward would prove to be useful to them in breaking through their bottlenecks and getting their own 5-star formation master would just be a matter of time.

"But before that, we have to look into Zhang shi's background,

where he came from and where he is heading to for the report. I'll be depending on you for this!" Guild Leader Zheng instructed.

"Yes!" Wang Haoxun nodded his head and hurriedly left.

Not too long later, he returned with a piece of paper in hand. The paper detailed various information concerning Zhang Xuan.

As one of the greatest power on the continent, it wasn't difficult for the Formation Master Guild to look into the affairs of an individual.

Not to mention, Zhang Xuan and the others didn't try to conceal their trail either.

"He came from Tianxuan Kingdom? In less than three months, he became a 2-star master teacher, 3-star apothecary, 3-star physician, 3-star painter, 2-star beast tamer, 5-star appraiser, quasi 4-star formation master..."

Browsing through the contents, Guild Leader Zheng's lips went dry.

The other party's capability had far exceeded his expectations.

In less than three months, the other party had walked from a remote location like Tianxuan Kingdom all the way to the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. Despite his young age, he was already a member of seven occupations, and some of those were even higher than

his...

How in the world did he do it?

"I was also very shocked when I first saw it..." Wang Haoxun smiled bitterly.

After gathering the news, he nearly died from shock.

"Actually, I wasn't the one who gathered this information. Zhang shi had eradicated a small clan known as the Lin Clan in Tianwu Kingdom, and that Lin Clan had extremely close ties with the local Formation Master Guild. Most of the information on the paper was retrieved from there."

Wang Haoxun continued, "However, even though we have so much information on his background, we still have no clue as to what he's going to do next. Should we ask him about it before reporting it to the headquarters?"

Guild Leader Zheng shook his hands as he said, "There's no need for it. Given his talents, there's little doubt that he's going to participate in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance's Master Teacher Tournament!"

"Master Teacher Tournament?" Wang Haoxun was taken aback. "The Master Teacher Tournament which involves twenty-seven other powers of influence rivaling the Myriad Kingdom Alliance?"

"That's right. This is a tournament conducted by [Huanyu Empire]'s Master Teacher Pavilion in collaboration with the twenty-seven subordinate Master Teacher Pavilions under them. It's a grand gathering that happens once every decade. Given the extent of the other party's capability, he will surely participate in it. Even if that isn't the case, he would surely at least spectate the tournament!" Guild Leader Zheng said.

"Indeed. As an event initiated by the Tier 2 Huanyu Empire, it boasts of handsome reward. There is no genius who could resist its allure." Wang Haoxun nodded in agreement. "Given Zhang shi's capability, he will definitely participate in it."

"Alright, you should hurry up and report it. Even though we can't rival the Master Teacher Pavilion, we should at least make formation master his secondary occupation. We mustn't allow his talents to be buried in the dust!"

Saying so, Guild Leader Zheng and Wang Haoxun began walking toward the Communication Wall.

Chapter 490: Transcendent Mortal!

Returning to the Appraiser Hall, Zhang Xuan immediately headed to his living quarters, secluded himself within a chamber, and immediately activated the Spirit Gathering Formation.

Having collected innumerable books, learned two dans of Heaven's Path Formation Art, sapped dry his Sword Intent, Saber Intent, and Spear Intent, Zhang Xuan was already terribly exhausted. If not for an adamant will driving him, he would have long collapsed.

Sitting at the center of the Spirit Gathering Formation, he flicked his hands and a pile of spirit stones appeared around him.

Tzzzzzzzzzzzz!

As soon as the spirit stones were placed in the formation, the spiritual energy harnessed within was immediately extracted. As though vegetables being placed within an oiled wok, a sizzling sound could be heard. After which, the concentration of spiritual energy in the surrounding started rising swiftly.

Threefold!

Fourfold!

Fivefold!

...

In the blink of an eye, the concentration in the area had already reached sixfold of the surroundings.

Pili pala!

As spiritual energy was being drawn rapidly, some of the spirit stones started crumbling. Paying it no heed, Zhang Xuan continued adding in more spirit stones to fuel the formation.

Eventually, when the concentration finally reached tenfold, Zhang Xuan stopped.

At this concentration, it was already no different from the rate of absorbing spiritual energy from the spirit stones straight already.

"Begin!"

Since all preparations were done, Zhang Xuan immediately widened the pores across his entire body to absorb the thick spiritual energy in the surroundings rapidly. Then, converting them into Heaven's Path zhenqi, he refilled the energy expenditure he had incurred before.

Two hours later, his fatigue disappeared without a trace and he felt revitalized. He had finally reached his peak condition.

"Breakthrough!"

Muttering softly, the overflowing Heaven's Path zhenqi in his body began to strike at the barriers restraining his further progress.

Kacha!

After a seemingly long period of time, a crisp sound reminiscent of a small chick breaking out of its shell sounded. As though having knocked down a ceiling capping him, Zhang Xuan's body underwent an astonishing metamorphosis.

Nourished, every single cell on his body and his soul were undergoing a rapid qualitative evolution.

His lifespan which was capped at 100 began rising at a speed visible to the eye.

110!

120!

130!

...

His muscles and skin seemed to have been reborn, and they became even more supple and powerful.

Of one's entire life, the growth stage at which one had the best skin was infancy. During that period time, one's body would be overflowing with vitality, allowing all injuries to heal swiftly.

But along with the rise in one's age, as one consumed material food and the impurities in one's body started to increase, one's body would start to decline. As one's regenerative function lost out to the decline, one's bodily functions would gradually fail.

The Transcendent Mortal realm served to overcome this limit.

One who succeeded in the breakthrough would be brought back to their prime. Even a person who had a single foot in the grave would be overflowing with vitality.

Even though the Heaven's Path zhenqi that Zhang Xuan cultivated was incomparably pure and was highly beneficial to both his body and his soul, it still wasn't sufficient to grant him the strength and lifespan of a Transcendent Mortal. Thus, before this breakthrough, he was still constrained by the limits of a mortal.

This was the difference in the level of existence. Take an ant and an elephant for example, even the strongest ant could never defeat the weakest elephant.

Thus, having this step into new realms, his body seemed to have

been nourished by the most concentrated energy of the world, making him feel incredibly energized and revitalized.

"Continue!"

After reaching the Prolonged Longevity realm, Zhang Xuan threw out another bunch of spirit stones and continued driving the Transcendent Mortal 1-dan Heaven's Path Divine Art. Just like that, he gradually broke through the various bottlenecks in his cultivation.

Prolonged Longevity realm primary stage!

Prolonged Longevity realm intermediate stage!

Prolonged Longevity realm advanced stage!

...

Two hours later, Zhang Xuan finally reached Prolonged Longevity realm pinnacle.

And at that moment, his lifespan had been increased from 100 to 200 years!

At Prolonged Longevity realm pinnacle, one's lifespan would be doubled.

When he exhaled deeply, unlike the usual turbid gas filled with impurities that were clogging up his meridians, it carried the light fragrance of nature.

Having reached the level of a Transcendent Mortal, one's physical body would possess the quality similar to a newborn infant, untarnished by impurities or pollutants.

Due to the overwhelming vitality within a child, it was extremely rare for them to suffer from bad breath. The current Zhang Xuan was also the same.

"Hearing, sight, smell... My five senses have been significantly enhanced as well!"

Opening his eyes and looking at the distance, he could see the ants several dozen meters away clearly. In fact, even the singing of the canaries several hundred meters away were crystal clear to his ears.

The rise in his cultivation realm had enhanced his five senses significantly. His reaction speed had increased by twofold.

The enhanced senses made it easier for him to harmonize with the nature, thus facilitating the absorption of spiritual energy and increasing his rate of cultivation.

No wonder there was the saying 'Beneath the Transcendent Mortals are all ants'! Only upon reaching this realm could one

understand how fearsome it was.

"It seems like Ding Hong is one of the weaker cultivators at Prolonged Longevity realm. Otherwise, it would definitely be impossible for me to subdue him so easily!"

Upon reaching this level, Zhang Xuan realized how fortunate he was in his fight with Ding Hong back then.

Without proper guidance, that fellow had fumbled his way through the realms. Even though he had successfully made the breakthrough, he was one of the weakest ones of the tier. If Zhang Xuan had met with a Transcendent Mortal 1-dan cultivator from the Myriad Kingdom Alliance back then instead, he would definitely have been in for a hard fight.

"After reaching Transcendent Mortal 1-dan pinnacle, my strength, when totaled up, adds up to more than two hundred thousand ding!"

Clenching his fists tightly, Zhang Xuan chuckled in joy.

At Prolonged Longevity realm, only one's lifespan would be enhanced. As such, before reaching Transcendent Mortal 2-dan, one's strength would be capped at a hundred thousand. On the other hand, Zhang Xuan had already achieved that might at Half-Transcension realm.

At this moment, along with the rise in his cultivation realm, his

strength had increased by two times, thus reaching two hundred thousand!

In terms of just strength, he was already comparable to a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan Origin Energy realm intermediate stage expert.

At Origin Energy realm primary stage, one would possess the strength of 150,000 ding, 200,000 ding at intermediate stage, 250,000 ding at advanced stage, and 300,000 ding at pinnacle.

And this was only in terms of zhenqi. If one were to factor in one's comprehension of the nature, the strength at one's disposal would be much greater.

"I can achieve breakthroughs swiftly via Heaven's Path Divine Art, but... the expense is truly too great!"

Having gathered more than a thousand cultivation technique manuals, Zhang Xuan understood the rate of cultivation of ordinary Transcendent Mortal 1-dan cultivators. Even the most talented person would require several years of hard work to climb from primary stage to pinnacle. However, Zhang Xuan had done the same in just two hours...

Anyone who had witnessed the speed of his cultivation could definitely die of shock.

But while the speed was astounding, the expense was fearsome as

well.

After the breakthrough, his Heaven's Path zhenqi had undergone a qualitative change, becoming even purer and less viscous.

If the Heaven's Path zhenqi were sand grains that could easily pass through small spaces previously, then at this moment... it was no different from flowing water. It could even slip through gaps that were indiscernible to the eye.

With the increase in the purity of his zhenqi, naturally, the requirements for Zhang Xuan's spiritual energy rose proportionately as well. Even though he had earned several ten thousand spirit stones through various means, there wasn't much of it that was sufficiently pure for him to absorb. Almost ninety percent of the spiritual energy contained within each spirit stone went to waste along with his cultivation.

He thought that the amount of spirit stones he had earned should be sufficient for him to reach Transcendent Mortal 3-dan or 4-dan but from the looks of it, he was being too naive.

The spirit stones that he had earned from the Appraiser Hall, the wager, guidance, and sale of the Soulless Metal Humanoid... had nearly dried out!

In other words... he used up nearly fifty thousand spirit stones just to advance from Prolonged Longevity realm primary stage to Prolonged Longevity realm pinnacle!

If it was anyone else, this amount of spirit stones would be more than sufficient for them to reach Transcendent Mortal 4-dan.

"I'm back to becoming a poor bloke again..."

Smiling bitterly, Zhang Xuan shook his head helplessly.

Three days ago, he had to go through so much trouble just to make fifty thousand spirit stones. He thought that he had earned a huge wealth capable of rivaling several kingdoms already. Yet, to think that he would be back to square one after a cultivation session...

It was no wonder by people say cultivating was a money-burning business. From the looks of it, the description couldn't be any more apt.

Without sufficient spirit stones, it would be difficult for him to raise his cultivation realm.

"This kind of low-tier spirit stone is no longer sufficient to fuel my cultivation..."

Smiling bitterly, Zhang Xuan contemplated over his future course of action.

Several ten thousand spirit stones were only sufficient to raise his cultivation by one realm. If he were to attempt to advance through Origin Energy or even higher realms, it was unimaginable,

how many spirit stones would be required?

It felt as though even if he were to earn several hundred thousand or even a million spirit stones, it would still be far from sufficient to support his cultivation.

Furthermore, there would come a point that the quality he required for his cultivation would exceed the purity of the spirit stone. At that point, all of the spirit stones would lose their worth.

If Zhang Xuan wanted to raise his cultivation swiftly, he would have to find some way to obtain a middle-tier spirit stone.

This kind of spirit stone possessed spiritual energy of extremely high purity which was much easier and more convenient to absorb.

"Three days is up, Luo Zhu should be done by now. I should hurry over to the soul oracle tomb to find a way to save Lu Chong!"

Standing up, Zhang Xuan walked out of the chamber.

It was already the second day when Zhang Xuan went to the Formation Master Guild. After the hassle there and the four hours spent on cultivation after returning, it was already around the promised time they agreed on.

This trip to the soul oracle tomb would determine whether Lu Chong could be awoken from his coma or not. Zhang Xuan would

not allow any hiccups to occur.

Heading to the lounge, he realized that Luo Zhu had already arrived.

Zhao Ya and the others were also done with their cultivation, and they were standing by the side of the room.

His students didn't let down his expectations. In three days' time, they had all reached Zhizun realm. This was especially so for Zhao Ya, who had reached Zhizun realm intermediate stage. From her aura, one could vaguely feel overwhelming power.

Sun Qiang hadn't been slacking off the past three days as well. He had completely reinforced his cultivation as a Transcendent Mortal 1-dan. Even though he was still a far way off from matching up to Zhang Xuan, as compared to his cultivation of Zhenqi realm a few months ago, he had come quite a long way in this limited period of time.

"Zhang shi!"

Upon noticing his arrival, everyone turned their gazes over.

"Are you done with the preparations? If so, let's set off," Zhang Xuan said.

"I'm done with the preparations!" Luo Zhu nodded his head.

The items he needed for the trip to the soul oracle tomb were all ready.

"Do you all intend to accompany us to the soul oracle tomb or are you all returning to the Myriad Kingdom Alliance?"

Zhang Xuan turned to Zhao Feiwu and the others.

"The soul oracle tomb is dangerous so we'll pass on the offer..."

Jin Conghai was just about to reject the request when Zhao Feiwu interrupted, "Of course we'll be following as well. I've only read about the soul oracles from ancient texts. If their inheritance can really be found in the tomb, then it'll be worth going through the danger!"

"Gong... Gongzi, your body..."

Alarmed, Jin Conghai hurriedly persuaded.

He wasn't weak, and he was confident of protecting the gongzi under most circumstances... However, the soul oracle tomb was simply uncharted territories. It was a treacherous location even for him. Gongzi's cultivation was as good as null, and if they were to head there like that, he wasn't confident of ensuring the latter's safety.

As the other party's subordinate, he didn't dare to take such risks.

"Don't worry. Even though my fighting prowess is lacking, I am more than capable of protecting myself!" Zhao Feiwu chuckled lightly. "Besides, isn't Zhang shi here? I am eagerly waiting to see how he will wreak havoc in the soul oracle tomb!"

"But..."

Hearing the other party's resolute voice, Jin Conghai was conflicted. However, he still gave in eventually.

"Alright then, let's set off!"

Since everyone had already made up their minds, they climbed onto the back of the spirit beast without any hesitation.

This mount was Zhao Feiwu's spirit beast, and it had a wide back. Even though more than a dozen people were riding on it, it wasn't cramped at all.

Spreading its wings, it soared into the vast skies.

Soul oracle tomb, here we come!

Chapter 491: Coax Ridge

A spirit beast soared in the boundless skies.

It was the third day since Zhang Xuan left Honghai City.

The direction which the soul oracle tomb was located at a direction opposite of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance.

The geographical terrain consisted of winding mountains reminiscent of a massive dragon lying the ground, ready to rise into the heavens at any moment.

Within the room on the back of the spirit beast, Zhang Xuan stood in front of the window with his eyes closed.

In the past three days, he had reinforced his cultivation as a Transcendent Mortal 1-dan pinnacle cultivator. At this moment, he was currently reorganizing the information he had collected on soul oracles in his mind.

Back then, in order to accurately determine the identity of the Soulless Metal Humanoid, Hall Master Sai had collected quite a few books on soul oracles. After duplicating those books from the Appraiser Hall, Zhang Xuan hadn't been able to find time to browse through them. Since he had some free time now, he decided to make use of this opportunity look through them.

"Compile!"

Muttering softly, the correct information recorded in the dozens of books in the Library of Heaven's Path gathered together to form a new book.

All of the soul oracle-related books collected shared a common description on the occupation—Mysterious and fearsome.

Their deep knowledge concerning the subject of souls made them a fearsome existence.

It didn't take long for Zhang Xuan to read through the entire book, and he shook his head.

The heritage of the occupation had been severed and there weren't many records left on it. The books remaining were uncomprehensive and useful information was terribly limited.

After browsing through the books, Zhang Xuan was left with more doubts than he'd started with.

"Forget it, I'll just deal with whatever that comes my way!"

Knowing that there wasn't any useful information to be derived from the books, Zhang Xuan sighed. Opening his eyes, he turned to Sun Qiang, Zhao Ya and the others and said, "All of you come here!"

"Teacher!"

"Young master!"

The group gathered around Zhang Xuan.

Seeing the grave expression on Zhang Xuan's face, Zhao Feiwu asked, "Since Zhang Xuan has some matters to delegate, should we step aside for a moment?"

There were many secrets within a teacher-student lineage that outsiders shouldn't know of.

Zhang Xuan waved his hands. "There's no need for it, it isn't something major. I just want to remind them of some things that they have to take note of when we're at the soul oracle tomb."

"Oh? Things to take note of? Then... can we listen in too?" Zhao Feiwu, Hall Master Sai, and the others' eyes lit up, and they hurriedly turned their attention over.

Who was the young man before him?

He was the master teacher who could even expel a soul oracle from a person's body! Not to mention, he was a 5-star appraiser and quasi 4-star formation master. How could the advice from such a person be anything ordinary?

If they were to listen to his words, they would definitely have a much better chance at survival in the soul oracle tomb.

"Of course, feel free!"

Ignoring the excited crowd, Zhang Xuan turned to his students and subordinate and spoke gravely.

"Take note of this. When we're at the soul oracle tomb, if anyone gets possessed... make sure not to devour the other party's soul carelessly. There are questions I would like to ask!"

If the soul that possessed Luo Zhu was still alive, Zhang Xuan would surely be able to derive useful information from him. If so, there might be no need for him to take the risk and venture into the soul oracle tomb.

The more he thought about it, the more regretful he felt about the matter. Thus, he made sure to instruct the others properly this time around.

Otherwise, if this bunch of kids and Sun Qiang were to rush to devour the soul oracles later on, it would be too late.

"Yes!"

Zhao Ya and the others hurriedly nodded their heads.

In order to protect them, their teacher had left a surge of zhenqi within each of them. Even if some soul oracle were to charge up to them, they would at least be able to avoid being possessed.

"Un, that's more like it! Alright, that's all. You all should continue cultivating!"

After finishing his instructions, Zhang Xuan waved his hands.

Nodding, Zhao Ya and the others nodded and dispersed.

"Just like that?"

The others thought that Zhang Xuan was going to conduct a detailed briefing so they were filled with expectations. However, after hearing those words, the mouths of Zhao Feiwu, Hall Master Sai, and the others twitched; their nearly fainted on the spot.

There was no one who wouldn't be filled with trepidation when heading toward a soul oracle tomb, fearful that something might catch them off-guard... Yet, this fellow made it seem as though he and his students were just going on a picnic!

What in the world was with that official 'allow me to have a bite first before you all devour your food' announcement...

"Cough cough!"

Luo Zhu even choked on his saliva.

For this trip to the soul oracle tomb, he had prepared many things. In fact, he had even written his will... And yet, the other party seemed to treat it like a leisure walk, and there wasn't the slightest worry in his attitude.

Humans were truly born different...

Suppressing his frustration, Luo Zhu glanced downward at the geographical terrain, did a rough calculation on their current location, and walked up to Zhang Xuan.

"Zhang shi, we're about to arrive at the soul oracle tomb!"

Zhang Xuan looked around and asked, "About to arrive? Where are we now?"

"We're currently at the Myriad Kingdom Alliance's Nine Folds Mountain."

"Thousand li of Nine Folds Mountain, ten thousand li of Red Ripple Sea. This is where the border with Mingxia Empire is located?" Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up.

There was a map on the Myriad Kingdom Alliance in the Appraiser Hall, and Zhang Xuan had browsed through it. As such, he had a rough idea on the various landmarks across the empire. He had thought that the soul oracle tomb would be located in the

middle of the alliance so he was surprised to learn that they were at the border.

Mingxia Empire was another empire of equivalent standing to the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. They were also one of the twenty-seven powers participating in the Master Teacher Tournament.

The Nine Folds Mountain was the boundary between the two powers, and battles broke out here often. As such, it was considered as one of the danger zones.

"It isn't at the border yet, it is located at the third fold, Coax Ridge!" Luo Zhu said.

The Nine Folds Mountain consisted of a total of nine folds. There was a more specific name for each fold, and Coax Ridge was located at the third fold.

Legend had it that a powerful expert was once assaulted by a spirit beast stampede passing through the region. Thus, he calmly coaxed them and eventually, the spirit beasts decided to back off, thus came the name of the Coax Ridge.

Spiritual energy was concentrated in this region, thus resulting in many spirit beasts and savage beasts roaming the area. Thus, even though it wasn't the border of the two empires, it was considered as one of the more dangerous locations. Most people would avoid coming here if possible.

"There are many spirit beasts on the Coax Ridge so we can't fly over. Otherwise, there's a chance that we might be assaulted by aerial spirit beasts!"

Upon hearing the name of the location where they were headed to, Jin Conghai frowned.

A Transcendent Mortal expert was still incapable of flight yet. As such, it could prove to be dangerous if they came under the assault of other aerial spirit beasts. After all, if they were to fall from the sky, at such a high altitude, they would most probably die immediately upon contact with the ground.

Thus, very few people would dare to ride a flying mount through where aerial spirit beasts were numerous.

"Elder Jin is right. However, there's no need to worry. Since Gongzi's spirit beast has reached Transcendent Mortal 3-dan pinnacle, most spirit beasts wouldn't dare trifle with it. We should be able to fly straight to our destination.

"But of course, we can't land directly at the location itself. There's a formidable aerial spirit beast living in the vicinity of the soul oracle tomb. I'm afraid that we might incur its wrath if we were to approach carelessly!"

"You mean that [[Demon Cinque Beast](#)]?" Jin Conghai asked.

"Elder, you also know about this beast?" Luo Zhu was taken

aback.

"Of course I do! On top of its ability of flight, it has reached Transcendent Mortal 4-dan pinnacle, thus making it a fearsome existence. It has terrorized some of the neighboring villages and killed on numerous occasions. In order to deal with it, the alliance has tried sending many experts to kill it several times, only to end in failure!"

With a grim expression, Jin Conghai continued, "Furthermore, on top of its speed and strength, it is said to possess a Dragon Bloodline, thus granting it nearly invincible defense. As such, it's a troublesome adversary to deal with. Even the Beast Hall isn't able to do anything about it. You said that the soul oracle is near to its nest, may I know how far away it is?"

"It is only several hundred meters away from its nest. The last time I came, I studied its habits and sneaked in while it was busy looking for food. There are more of us this time around so it will be easier for us to get caught. Thus, I think we should proceed carefully," Luo Zhu said.

"Several hundred meters? That's a little too close..."

Jin Conghai frowned.

At Transcendent Mortal 4-dan Clarifying Turbidity realm, one's soul would gain a certain level of autonomy from one's body. Under such a state, just by one's senses, one could easily perceive the happenings within a radius of several hundred meters around

one.

At such a distance, it was almost impossible for them to alarm the other party even if they were to proceed carefully.

Even though Jin Conghai was a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan expert as well, he was only at primary stage. On top of that, the Demon Cinque Beast was an aerial spirit beast possessing a Dragon Bloodline. He wasn't a match for the other party at all.

Even though he could resort to poison, he needed the other party to be unguarded first. Putting aside how the Demon Cinque Beast was wary of humans, the Dragon Bloodline also provided it with an extremely high immunity to poison. If he were to fail to kill it in a single shot, he might incur the other party's fury and cause everyone's death.

The soul oracle tomb was already dangerous by itself, to think that there would be such a ferocious fellow camping in the surroundings on top of that.

After hesitating for a moment, Luo Zhu said, "It is an extremely short distance, but after hiding in this region for three months, I managed to find some patterns in its behavior. As long as we proceed carefully, we shouldn't get noticed."

"Since you managed to find some patterns in its behavior, why don't we do it this way?" After contemplating for a moment, Jin Conghai turned to Zhang Xuan and asked, "Zhang shi, shall we stop two kilometers away from the Demon Cinque's nest and

slowly walk over?"

Unknowingly, Zhang Xuan had become the de facto leader of the group.

It had become a habit for them to look to him for answers.

"Alright." Zhang Xuan nodded.

He had never been here before, and he didn't know about the Demon Cinque Beast or how strong it was. Since the duo had already discussed it, he thought that it should be fine to go along with their decision.

Two kilometers wasn't much of a distance to cultivators of their capability.

"Alright. Tell me when we're nearing the location. I'll have the tamed beast make a landing," Jin Conghai said.

"Un!" Luo Zhu nodded.

While the others were discussing, Sun Qiang, upon seeing Hall Master Sai's face turn pale after hearing about the Demon Cinque Beast, couldn't hold himself back and asked, "Have you heard of that Demon Cinque Beast as well?"

"Of course I've heard of it!" Hall Master Sai smiled bitterly. "That

fellow is incomparably strong. It's said that the head of the Beast Hall has once led twelve elders to encircle and subdue it, but the operation eventually ended in failure!"

"Twelve elders?"

"That's right. Those who are qualified to become elders in the Beast Hall possess cultivation at least that of my level. Much can be said about the strength of the Demon Cinque Beast given how they failed despite mobilizing so many experts!"

Hall Master Sai shook his head, "Not only is that fellow capable of flight, due to its Dragon Bloodline, it possesses incredible defense as well. Even Spirit intermediate-tier weapons could do no harm to it.

"On top of that, it has a violent temper and it is extremely territorial... If it is really guarding that area, it won't be easy for us to approach..."

"Are you afraid?"

Interrupting the other party's words, Sun Qiang uttered in disdain. "If you are scared, you might as well leave right now. To think that you're still the head of the Appraiser Hall..."

"Me... afraid?" Seeing the other party's expression, Hall Master Sai nearly fainted.

To think that a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan expert like him would be looked down on and mocked by an insignificant butler...

Infuriated, he was just about to lash out when Luo Zhu's voice echoed.

"We're here..."

After which, the aerial spirit beast began on its descend, headed straight for the winding mountain range.

This is a little tricky one. Cinque has the meaning of five. The original text is 'chen' which has the meaning of the chen hour.

(Just to explain, the denomination for time in ancient China works intervals of two hours. As such, there are a total of twelve (two-)hours a day, and each of these (two-)hours have a Chinese character to denote them)

Chen is the fifth hour on the timing system (7AM - 9AM). At the same time, the Chinese zodiac is aligned with the timing system, and the Dragon is ranked fifth in the zodiac. All in all, this is a particularly obscure hint to denote that the Demon Cinque Beast actually possesses the Dragon Bloodline.

Chapter 492: Someone Is Here

Jumping off the back of the spirit beast, Zhang Xuan took in a deep breath and immediately felt the dense spiritual energy in the surroundings. The concentration of spiritual energy here was indeed much higher than anywhere else.

"It's nearly twofold!" Zhang Xuan evaluated.

It was no wonder why Jin Conghai and Luo Zhu said that there were many spirit beasts here. With such dense spiritual energy, one's rate of cultivation would definitely be fast. Under such circumstances, it wasn't surprising for spirit beasts to be attracted to the region.

Regardless of whether it was a spirit beast or savage beast, just like humans, they preferred areas with high concentration of spiritual energy.

Activating the Eye of Insight, Zhang Xuan surveyed the surroundings.

As expected, he saw the traces of many savage beasts and spirit beasts.

"Hmm? Why are there so many footprints?"

Suddenly, Zhang Xuan's eyes fell on a particular spot.

No too far away, on top of the claw prints of spirit beasts, he noticed some human footprints as well. There were nearly ten of such trails, and judging from the moisture of the surrounding ground, those footprints seemed to be freshly made.

"Someone has just walked by here. Could they know about the soul oracle tomb as well?"

Seeing those footprints, Jin Conghai's eyebrows knitted together.

A radius of two kilometers was about the limit of the Demon Cinque Beast's perception. Before such danger, one should be eager to escape as far as possible. Why would anyone walk in to court their deaths?

Unless there was a greater profit driving them... In other words, there was a good chance that someone knew about the existence of the soul oracle tomb as well.

This ancient occupation might be mysterious and feared, but it was still a trove of knowledge and power. Many experts would definitely rush in if they were to learn of the location of the tomb.

It was just like how the auction of the Soulless Metal Humanoid managed to attract the attention of so many powers.

"Impossible! The location of the soul oracle tomb is deeply hidden. Even I had to spend a very long time searching before finding it despite possessing some hints on its location. Besides,

when I left the tomb, I sealed tightly and concealed it..."

Luo Zhu shook his head.

The inheritance of the soul oracles had been severed since ancient times. The only reason why he could find the soul oracle tomb was due to some information he retrieved from another ancient tomb.

The seniors of the ancient tomb's owner had participated in the building of the soul oracle tomb, and they had left behind some hints on its location inside. It took him great effort to decipher the clues to pinpoint the soul oracle tomb to this area.

He didn't think that there would be another person who would be as lucky as him.

"Then those footprints..." Jin Conghai questioned doubtfully.

"I have no idea either..." Even though he was certain that the location of the soul oracle tomb wouldn't be exposed, he couldn't help but feel slightly worried by those fresh footprints.

"Are these footprints pointed toward the direction of the soul oracle tomb?" Zhang Xuan asked.

After calculating the direction for a moment, Luo Zhu replied, "... That's right."

"There's no point thinking about it here. Let's go up and take a look!" Zhang Xuan waved his hands.

There was no point getting distressed over the matter here. If someone had really beaten them to it, they might as well just go forward to take a look. It would be best if they could share some information regarding the soul oracle tomb, and if not, he would find some way to deal with it then.

Besides, these footprints did not necessarily mean that those people were headed for the soul oracle tomb.

"Un!"

Everyone nodded, and the group proceeded forward.

"The number of footprints are increasing..."

The further they advanced, the more footprints that appeared. It seemed like quite a substantial group was gathered here.

Analyzing the footprints, Jin Conghai said, "These footprints are extremely light, and the distance between every single footprint is almost identical... This means that those people possess a powerful control over the environment. From this, we can conclude the ones who left the footsteps behind were mostly Transcendent Mortal 2-dan or 3-dan experts!"

As a poison master, he was often pursued by his enemies. Thus, in order to protect himself, he had specially studied tracking skills, granting him exceptional acuity in his assessment toward such matters.

"Un!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

Zhang Xuan had never studied books regarding tracking, but based on the feedback from the Eye of Insight, he came to the same conclusion as well.

Knowing that the other party was a large group of experts, Jin Conghai's face turned grim. As he advanced forward, he sent a telepathic message to Zhao Feiwu.

"Gongzi, if there is any danger, summon the tamed beast immediately and leave along with the rest!"

Zhao Feiwu turned to him and asked, "What about you?"

"Even though my fighting prowess isn't top-notch in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, I still do possess some life-preserving skills. If I have to take care of the rest of you while in danger, none of us will survive!" Jin Conghai said.

As a poison master, it wouldn't be easy to kill him.

The one thing that poison masters didn't fear at all was encirclement.

"Alright!" Seeing that the other party had already made up his mind, Zhao Feiwu nodded.

Even though plundering was rare under the influence of the Master Teacher Pavilion, it didn't mean that it didn't happen at all.

If they were to come under attack in the wilderness, there would be no one to redress their grievances.

Even if she was the princess of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, considering how difficult it would be to trace down the culprits, it was unlikely that the enemies would give them any slack.

"You all be careful as well!"

Zhang Xuan turned to instruct Zhao Ya and the others as well before walking in front of them.

Even if he were to meet with danger, with the Eye of Insight, Library of Heaven's Path, and Heaven's Path Movement Art, he was still able to take care of himself. However, his students had just achieved a breakthrough not too long ago, and they had yet to reach Transcendent Mortal realm as well. Thus, they might be unable to cope.

"Yes!"

Seeing their teacher's back in front of them, Zhao Ya and the others found their anxiety disappearing.

Their teacher's silhouette felt like a reliable mountain to them. Regardless of where they were, as long as their teacher was with them, they felt as though there was nothing that they couldn't overcome.

After carefully advancing forward for around a kilometer, the group passed a ridge and saw a valley before them.

The valley was extremely deep, and they couldn't see the end at a single glance. It was filled with all kinds of trees and plants, and due to the high concentration of spiritual energy, they were exceptionally lush. At this point, the footprints from before disappeared as well.

Luo Zhu walked forward and said, "Zhang shi, the soul oracle tomb is within the valley..."

"Un!" Zhang Xuan nodded his head. He was just about to instruct the group to be careful when 'huala!', a few figures appeared from the bushes and blocked the advance of the group.

"Identify yourselves!"

Hostility could be heard the other party's deep voice.

Zhang Xuan glanced at the few figures before him.

There was a total of six men, and all of them were in their thirties. Vaguely, one could sense an aura no weaker than a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan from them. The strongest of them, a gray-robed man, had even reached Transcendent Mortal 3-dan, Yin-Yang realm.

With this kind of strength, he was on par even with that 4-star master teacher Zhang Xuan met before, Song Chao.

"Who are you all?"

Stepping forward, Jin Conghai revealed his cultivation. "What do you all intend to do by hiding here?"

"Transcendent Mortal 4-dan?"

Upon feeling the immense strength Jin Conghai was exerting, the faces of the men paled. They glanced at one another, and eventually, the gray-robed man said, "Elder, our elders are currently doing something inside and they mustn't be interrupted now. I beseech you all to take a detour instead!"

"Detour?"

Frowning, Jin Conghai's face darkened. "We have matters to attend inside as well, I ask of you to give way!"

"Elder, do you intend to barge through?"

Seeing that the other party had no intention to give in, the men's complexion turned awful.

Hualala!

Crisp sounds echoed in the air as they drew their swords.

Even though they were only Transcendent Mortal 2-dan and 3-dan cultivators, they had no intention of stepping back either.

"Hah! Even if I do intend to barge through, do you all think you can stop me?"

With a powerful and authoritative disposition, Jin Conghai stepped forward.

Chapter 493: Hall Master of the Beast Hall

"I have to try even if I can't!"

The gray-robed man didn't retreat. Instead, he stepped forward and beckoned for the others. Then, all of a sudden, with a light metallic buzz, the few men charged forward simultaneously, and their weapons formed a net of swords headed straight toward Jin Conghai.

Their cultivation was far inferior to Jin Conghai but the powerful sword qi they were emitting felt indomitable.

"A collaborative formation?"

Jin Conghai frowned.

The movements of these men were complementing one another via the usage of a battle formation. Furthermore, from the looks of it, the formation didn't seem to be weak at all. Even with Jin Conghai's superior cultivation realm, he would probably be in for a difficult fight.

The main function of this kind of collaborative formation was to amplify the strength of a group to match up to a cultivator far stronger than them.

It was just like how Zhao Ya, Yuan Tao, and the others were not a match for Lu Xun individually back then, but through the use of a

collaborative formation, they still managed to subdue the latter.

Of the six men, the strongest person, the gray-robed man, was only a Transcendent Mortal 3-dan and the rest were all Transcendent Mortal 2-dan. However, through the use of a formation, they could display strength several folds higher.

A wave of sword qi gushed straight at Jin Conghai.

Even when their opponent was a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan expert, they were still able to stand their ground.

"Hmph!"

Without the slightest fluster, Jin Conghai stomped his feet on the ground and charged forward.

Zhenqi gushed into his fingers as he compressed the surrounding air, deflecting the sword qi that were rushing at him.

This was the first time Zhang Xuan had seen a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan expert fighting at his full strength, and the battle was way beyond his expectations.

Every single one of Jin Conghai's move seemed to carry a unique order. His blows were heavy at a moment, light in the next, and the air in the surroundings seemed to move to complement his movements. Even though the other party's formation was profound and formidable, it wouldn't be easy for them to hurt him.

However, he was restricted by the six swords. It would be difficult for him to break out of it within a short period of time.

Admittedly, if he were to resort to his poison, he could subdue the other party immediately.

However, there wasn't an irreconcilable grudge between him and those men. Also, they weren't worthy of having him reveal his hand as well.

Peng peng peng!

Both sides clashed furiously with one another, but the shock wave was only confined to an area of several dozen meters. This revealed the precise control they had over their strength.

"Let me help you!"

Seeing that it would be impossible for the fight to end in the short run, Hall Master Sai was fearful that if they were to be stalled here for too long, the Demon Cinque Beast might be alarmed. Thus, bellowing deeply, he stepped into the battle as well.

His fighting prowess wasn't inferior to Jin Conghai in the least. With his entry, the collaborative sword formation immediately fell apart, and the six young men were jolted backward.

After several collisions, their swords were knocked away and they fell into a weak state.

Given their cultivation realm, it was impossible for them to face two 4-dan experts simultaneously.

"Alright!"

Seeing that the six men were on the verge of defeat, Hall Master Sai and Jin Conghai prepared to advance forward to deal the final blow when Zhang Xuan suddenly shook his hands. "That's enough, we're all on the same side!"

Hearing those words, everyone was taken aback.

Could it be that Zhang shi knew the other party?

"On the same side?" The gray-robed man was perplexed, and he looked at Zhang Xuan with a bewildered glance.

"I am Beast Tamer Zhang Xuan!"

Ignoring the other party's attitude, Zhang Xuan stepped forward, flicked his wrist, and took out a beast tamer emblem. "If I'm not wrong, all of you are beast tamers as well, right?"

Upon seeing the emblem, the few men immediately heaved a sigh of relief. Flicking their wrists as well, they took out their emblems.

Just as Zhang Xuan had said, they were all beast tamers.

Frowning, Hall Master Sai asked, "You're all from the Beast Hall?"

Probably only the Beast Hall had the capability to dispatch six beast tamers of such strength simultaneously.

"Yes!" The gray-robed man nodded.

"I am Sai Xiaoyu from the Appraiser Hall. May I know if your hall master is Han Chong or Luo Ming?" Hall Master Sai asked.

"It's Hall Master Han Chong! Sai Xiaoyu... Ah, it's Hall Master Sai! Pardon me for my discourtesy..."

Hearing the name, the gray-robed man was taken aback for a moment before a figure appeared in his head and he immediately jolted in fear. He hurriedly clasped his fist and apologized.

There were two Beast Hall branches in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, and their hall masters were Han Chong and Luo Ming respectively. On the other hand, there was only one Appraiser Hall, and it was located in Honghai City. Even though the cultivation of this Hall Master Sai might be inferior to their hall master, due to the vast connections of the Appraiser Hall, they were both of equal standing.

Given that the other party was of equivalent standing to their hall master, it wasn't a big deal to lose to him.

"Un, so you're Old Han's men. I am old buddies with your Hall Master Han."

Upon knowing the background of the few men before him, Hall Master Sai nodded his head. Then, with slight doubt in his eyes, he asked, "Your Beast Hall branch should be in the vicinity of the Myriad Kingdom City, what are you all doing here?"

The Beast Hall branch which Han Chong was the hall master of was located in the mountains near Myriad Kingdom City. The Nine Fold Mountains were several hundred thousand kilometers away from their base, what could they be doing here?

"Reporting to Hall Master Sai, our hall master is currently in the midst of taming the Demon Cinque Beast..." Knowing that the other party was an old buddy of their hall master, the gray-robed man decided not to hide the matter.

"Taming the Demon Cinque Beast? Didn't your hall master attempt it three years ago but it ended in failure?" Hall Master Sai was perplexed.

The one who led the twelve elders to surround the Demon Cinque three years ago but ended in failure was exactly this Hall Master Han Chong. Could it be that the other party was unwilling to give up and came here to attempt it once more?

"Ever since the failure three years ago, our hall master has been coming here whenever he finds time to interact with the Demon Cinque Beast... After such a long period of time of companionship, their relationship has grown rather intimate... Thus, he intends to give it his all to tame it today. In order to prevent anyone who interrupting him, he ordered us to guard this area and prevent any savage beasts or strangers in!" the gray-robed man replied.

Hall Master Sai nodded his head.

Zhang Xuan also finally understood the situation.

Unlike Zhang Xuan, ordinary beast tamers didn't possess Heaven's Path zhenqi, and they couldn't use it as a bait to convince a savage beast to submit to them. Thus, they could only rely on the fellowship built over a long period of time and win its goodwill to tame it.

Back then, when Mo Yu tamed the Viridescent Eagle, she also used all kinds of treasure to attract it before winning its goodwill.

Given Hall Master Han Chong's ability, three years was probably more than sufficient for him to earn great intimacy with the Demon Cinque Beast. Thus, gauging that it was about time, he decided to tame it in a single go.

Hearing that his old buddy was currently trying to tame spirit beast whose notoriety was known in the entirety of the alliance, Hall Master Sai hesitated for a moment before asking, "Can we go over to take a look? If he were to meet with trouble, we may be

able to offer some assistance."

Beast taming was by no means an easy task. It wasn't too much if one could tame it, but failure could potentially unleash the wrath of the spirit beast onto one.

It was said that in the battle three years ago, Hall Master Chong was so severely injured that he had to recuperate on the bed for more than a month.

"Ah... Alright!" After a moment of contemplation, the gray-robed man finally nodded his head. "However, you all must be careful as well. The Demon Cinque Beast is arrogant and violent, make sure not to incur its ire!"

Given Hall Master Sai's esteemed standing, they were clearly not in the position to stop the other party. In any case, the beast taming hadn't started yet and the hall master and the other elders were still in the midst of the preparatory phase. Thus, the latter probably wouldn't blame him if he were to bring some men in.

"Rest assured, I am an old buddy of your hall master. I won't interfere in his affairs!" Hall Master Sai smiled.

It was beneath the dignity of an expert of Hall Master Sai's caliber to lie. Thus, the gray-robed nodded his head before turning to the other men and instructing, "The rest of you shall remain guard here. Don't allow any savage beasts or strangers to pass through!"

After which, he gestured forward and said, "Hall Master Sai, this way please."

The group followed along.

A short distance later, the lush mountain forest suddenly opened up. A waterfall flowed down from the mountain cliff, forming a lake of several hundred meters wide.

Not too far from the lake, an immense cavern could be seen. Outside the cavern stood a few elder, and they seemed to be waiting for something.

Upon hearing the footsteps, they turned around, and the elder standing at the direct center was just about to lash out when he caught sight of Hall Master Sai within the crowd and his eyes lit up, "Hall Master Sai, why are you here?"

"I just happened to be passing by. I was looking for some items when I was stopped by your men. From them, I learned that you intend to attempt taming the Demon Cinque Beast once more. Thus, I decided to come over to take a look," Hall Master Sai said.

The other party was the hall master of the Myriad Kingdom City Beast Hall, Han Chong!

"You also know of my condition. The competition between the two Beast Halls in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance is intense, and only one of the hall masters will obtain the opportunity to study at

Huanyu Empire. If I don't tame a spirit beast that towered over the others, there's no guarantee I will get the slot..."

Hall Master Han Chong smiled bitterly.

The two Beast Halls in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance had always been competing with one another. For the opportunity to study at a higher tiered Beast Hall, the two hall masters had been clashing with one another both in the shadows and in the open for several years already.

There was nothing that could prove a beast tamer's capability more than taming a powerful spirit beast.

Thus, for the past three years, Hall Master Han had been trying to tame this Demon Cinque Beast to take the lead.

"That's true... I heard that you've been trying to get close with it for the past three years, how is the progress?" Hall Master Sai asked.

"There isn't much of a difference from before. The Demon Cinque Beast possesses the Dragon Bloodline, thus giving rise to its arrogant and solitary personality. If it could be tamed that easily, I wouldn't have to go through so much trouble! If not for Huanyu Empire's envoy coming in a few days' time, I wouldn't be in such a rush as to thrash it out today!"

Hall Master Han shook his head.

For a spirit beast of this tier, three years was still a little too short. However, Hall Master Han had no other choice. The envoy was about to arrive soon, and if he couldn't tame this fellow before then, he would be at a disadvantageous position as compared to Hall Master Han Ming.

And if he were to fail the selections, it would be impossible for him to become a 5-star beast tamer in his lifetime.

"Then the reason why you all are waiting here is..."

Since they had decided they were going to tame the Demon Cinque Beast, then where was the star of the show? Why would they be gathering here instead of looking for the Demon Cinque Beast?

"It's inside the cavern now. That fellow usually only heads out to hunt during noon. It's still a little too early so it's still sleeping!" Hall Master Han gestured to the cavern.

"Ah!"

Hall Master Sai nodded his head.

"These are your juniors?"

After which, Hall Master Han turned to Zhang Xuan and the

others and asked doubtfully.

"Cough cough!"

Upon hearing the other party ask if Zhang shi was his junior, Hall Master Sai immediately jolted in fear. He quickly tried to clarify the matter but Zhang Xuan beat him to it. "I am Zhang Xuan, Hall Master Sai's friend!"

"Friend?"

Hall Master Han was taken aback.

As a 4-star appraiser, Hall Master Sai's standing wasn't beneath his in any way. Why would he become a friend with a lad who wasn't even twenty yet?

Perplexed, Hall Master Han asked, "May I know... what Brother Zhang's occupation is?"

"Reporting to the hall master, he's a 2-star beast tamer. I saw his emblem just a moment ago!"

Before Zhang Xuan could reply, the gray-robed man by the side interjected.

"2-star beast tamer?"

Hall Master Han's bizarre expression deepened.

There were many of beast tamers of such level in the Beast Hall. When did Hall Master Sai fall so low as to become friends with such a person?

Chapter 494: Snatching

"So, Little Brother is a beast tamer as well. To be able to reach 2-star at such a young age, the younger generation sure is impressive!"

Even though Hall Master Han was perplexed, he didn't allow his true thoughts to slip through. Claspng his hands, he spoke politely before turning his attention away.

A 2-star beast tamer under twenty was impressive, but in their Beast Hall, it wasn't a particularly rare sight.

Hearing the other party's perfunctory words, Zhang Xuan couldn't be bothered to explain himself.

His aim here was the soul oracle tomb. It didn't matter to him whether the other party viewed him highly or not. It would suffice as long as the other party didn't interfere in his affairs.

"Hall Master Han, Zhang..."

Seeing the attitude of his old buddy, Hall Master Sai immediately realized that the other party might be misunderstanding something. He immediately spoke up to explain the matter when the ground before them suddenly tremored and a loud voice echoed.

Roar!

A loud howl reminiscent of thunder boomed, and the leaves from the nearby withered trees immediately fell to the ground.

"Impressive!"

Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up.

Just the voice in itself was sufficient to jolt a cultivator beneath Zongshi realm to death.

For a single roar to be so incredible, as expected of a famous spirit beast in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance. It was indeed a fearsome existence.

"It's awake, let's begin!"

Hall Master Han's eyes lit up. He immediately turned around to instruct the elders.

Upon hearing the instructions, the elders nodded and stepped forward. One of them flicked their wrist.

Boom!

The massive corpse of a spirit beast appeared on the ground.

"The corpse of a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan [Deerhorde Beast]? You all even managed to hunt down one of those?"

Upon seeing the corpse, Zhao Feiwu's eyebrows leaped and a look of disbelief surfaced on her face.

"This spirit beast is incredible?" Sun Qiang asked doubtfully.

"The Deerhorde Beast is only a Transcendent Mortal 2-dan spirit beast and it isn't particularly strong. However, it possesses extraordinary speed. Its meat is fresh and juicy, making it a favored prey among spirit beasts and cultivators. Unfortunately, their numbers are severely limited and there might not be a single one across the entire Nine Folds Mountain. It must have surely cost a lot of time and effort to capture one!"

Due to her illness, Zhao Feiwu wasn't able to move around freely. Thus, she devoted her time to books. Given the unique nature of the Deerhorde Beast, she remembered it clearly.

Hearing the conversation of the two, the gray-robed man proudly explained, "Looks like you know quite a bit. This Deerhorde Beast took seventeen beast tamers over a course of half a year to hunt! It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that this is the only hunted Deerhorde Beast within the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance at the moment. It'll be impossible to find a second one on the market!"

Even though the cultivation of Deerhorde Beast wasn't too high, it possessed high wariness and it was exceptionally cunning. If not for so many beast tamers being dispatched for it, it would surely be

impossible to capture it.

"Un!" Even though the other party was being narcissistic, Zhao Feiwu knew that there wasn't any mistake in saying so.

It was indeed extremely difficult to capture this beast. Back then, a prince of the alliance (the household of the Alliance Head) was ill and required the heart of the Deerhorde Beast for treatment. Thus, the Alliance Head Residence offered a high monetary reward for the acquirement of this spirit beast but there was no result for five whole years.

Eventually, due to the lack of medicine, the prince's physical condition deteriorated and he eventually died.

It was also because of this that she flipped through the books and learned of the Deerhorde Beast.

"Not only is the flesh of the Deerhorse Beast fresh and juicy, more importantly, this spirit beast feeds on spirit herbs. Despite its weak cultivation, it is overflowing with spiritual energy, making it no different from a tonic. If a spirit beast were to consume it, they would be able to easily overcome their current bottleneck and reach higher realms!"

Hall Master Sai interjected. "In other words, it's a mobile Realm Breakthrough Pill!"

"I see. So, they are intending to use the corpse of this fellow to

please the Demon Cinque Beast!"

Coming to an understanding, Sun Qiang was astonished.

To think that they would even procure such a rare and difficult to hunt spirit beast to tame this Demon Cinque Beast. The hall master of the Beast Hall had truly gone all out this time.

While they were discussing this matter, Hall Master Han took in a deep breath and stepped forward.

"Brother Demon Cinque, I've prepared the items I told you about already. They are right here, come out and take a look!"

The voice echoed into the cave. There was a moment of silence, and the atmosphere grew tenser by the moment. Just as everyone was about to reach their limit, a loud gust of the wind blew out from within and a gigantic figure flew out.

It was a massive spirit beast possessing a height of around seven to eight meters. When its wings were spread apart, its length reached more than thirty meters long. Its eyes were scarlet as though fresh blood, giving it a fearsome appearance. At the same time, its body is filled with resilient-looking scales, reflecting its outstanding defensive capability.

The Transcendent Mortal 4-dan pinnacle aerial spirit beast that everyone within the Myriad Kingdom Alliance feared... the Demon Cinque!

Roarrrr!

As though having comprehended the words of Hall Master Han, the massive savage beast looked at the Deerhorde Beast corpse placed in front of him with fiery eyes.

Spirit beasts were already capable of absorbing spiritual energy to cultivate, and they possessed intelligence not beneath that of a human.

The corpse of this Deerhorde Beast was producing the deep fragrance of herbs and an intense spiritual energy disturbance. At this moment, its instincts were telling it that if it were to consume it, its cultivation would surely soar. Even if it wasn't able to reach Transcendent Mortal 5-dan, it wouldn't be too far from it then. Under such circumstances, how could it not feel agitated?

"Brother Demon Cinque, as long as you promise to a condition of mine, this Deerhorde Beast will be yours!"

Seeing that its interest was piqued, Hall Master Han chuckled lightly.

Roarrrr!

The Demon Cinque Beast turned its head to Hall Master Han, as though indicating its willingness to listen to the conditions of the latter.

"For the past three years, Brother Demon Cinque and I have been spending much time together, and I believe you should know have a clear understanding of what kind of person I am. My condition is simple... I hope that you can become my tamed beast!" Hall Master Han said. "Don't worry, we can sign an equal contract. This way, I won't be able to force you to do anything you are reluctant to!"

Roarrrrrrr!

Hearing that it had to become a tamed beast, the Demon Cinque Beast's face immediately warped in savagery and it roared in displeasure. It emanated a deep aura of hostility that left one's hair standing on ends.

It seemed to be saying that if Hall Master Han dared to continue talking about the matter, it would surely make a move.

As a bearer of the Dragon Bloodline, it was of esteemed standing. How could it possibly be willing to submit to a mere human and serve as its lackey?

"You shouldn't be in such a hurry to make your decision!"

Seeing how the other party refused him without the slightest hesitation, Hall Master Han's complexion turned awful. However, he quickly veiled it and chuckled, "I believe you should know of my standing among the humans. I am the head of the Beast Hall, a figure respected by many. Brother Demon Cinque, as long as you follow me, I will treat you as my peer and fulfill anything you ask

of to the best of my ability! The lifespan of spirit beasts might be long, but how long does it take for you to raise your cultivation by absorbing spiritual energy from the surroundings? You will be entitled to much better resources if you were to follow me!"

After finishing those words, Hall Master Han beckoned to the elders behind.

A few elders stepped forward and a bunch of spirit stones appeared on the floor.

They were all low-tier spirit stones but they stacked up into a mini mountain. There was at least several thousand of them, and their appearance immediately caused the spiritual energy in the surroundings to surge. Just by taking a whiff, one could feel their pores opening up and an indescribable feeling of comfort would envelop one.

Humans weren't the only one who could utilize spirit stones for their cultivation; spirit beasts were the same as well.

Cultivating through absorbing spiritual energy from spirit stones would surely be much faster than simply absorbing spiritual energy from the surroundings.

"There's a total of 8000 spirit stones here. As long as you agree to the condition, I can give them all to you right now," Hall Master Han said.

The reason why he could take out so many spirit stones while Hall Master Sai wasn't able to was not because the latter was poor. Rather, Hall Master Sai had spent the bulk of his money on collectibles, resulting in the amount of spirit stones he could take out at a moment to be severely limited. In terms of total assets, the latter would surely be far superior.

It was just like those antique collectors in the world Zhang Xuan lived in prior to his transcension. If those collectors were to sell their entire collection, they would surely be drowning in cash. However, as finding a suitable buyer for these items were difficult, the amount of cash they could take out at a given time might not compare up to some of the wealthier merchants.

"If you aren't interested in these spirit stones, you might be interested in this!"

Seeing the lack of response from the Demon Cinque Beast after taking out the bunch of spirit stones, Hall Master Han hesitated for a moment before gritting his teeth. Flicking his wrist, he took out a jade box.

Slowly opening it, a spirit stone came into sight.

Boom!

The moment the box was opened, the spiritual energy in the surroundings immediately grew so dense that it was nearly tangible. It felt as though as long as one was holding onto the spirit stone, even if one didn't attempt to absorb it, the spiritual energy

would still seep into one's body, enhancing one's body.

To put it simply, if one were to place this spirit stone by the side of an infant, even if the latter didn't cultivate, nourished by the spiritual energy contained within it, his body would become incredibly powerful and it would be immune to common illnesses. In less than two months, its physical body would become no weaker than that of a Pigu realm cultivator.

"Could this be a... middle-tier spirit stone?"

Zhang Xuan clenched his fists tightly in agitation.

Having read innumerable books, he knew a thing about two on the various tiers of spirit stones.

The spirit stones in his possession at the moment were of the most inferior grade, low-tier spirit stones.

Low-tier spirit stones were sufficient to support the cultivation of a cultivator of Transcendent Mortal 4-dan and below. Any higher than that would require spirit stones of higher grade.

Taking Zhang Xuan for example, due to the incredible purity of Heaven's Path zhenqi, even though he was only at Transcendent Mortal 1-dan Prolonged Longevity realm pinnacle, low-tier spirit stones were already nearly ineffective on his cultivation. If he wanted to reach Origin Energy realm, on top of completing the Heaven's Path Divine Art of that level, more importantly, he

needed a middle-tier spirit stone!

That spirit stone in Hall Master Han's hand was more than sufficient for his cultivation to rise from Prolonged Longevity realm pinnacle to Origin Energy realm pinnacle.

While quantity could make up for the disparity in quality, this logic only applied if the disparity in quality wasn't too great in the first place.

With sufficient straw, one might be able to buy a diamond. However, the properties of a straw could never achieve the properties of a diamond.

Thus, even though ten thousand low-tier spirit stones could be exchanged for a middle-tier spirit stone, it couldn't replace the effectiveness of a single middle-tier spirit stone.

"That's right, it is a middle-tier spirit stone!"

Not expecting his old buddy to take out such an invaluable object, Hall Master Sai's eyes widened in shock.

Middle-tier spirit stones were incomparably expensive. There wasn't more than a handful of it throughout the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance. The value of it could only be greater than the Deerhorde Beast!

Roarrrr!

Seeing the middle-tier spirit stone, the eyes of the Demon Cinque Beast grew even redder.

In truth, Hall Master Han's heart was also bleeding from taking out his greatest treasure. However, he knew that it would be impossible to hook in the Demon Cinque Beast without this much. Thus, clenching his jaws, he continued, "As long as Brother Demon Cinque agrees to becoming my tamed beast, this middle-tier spirit stone will be yours... Hm? Brother Demon Cinque, what are you intending to do..."

Before he could finish his words, the Demon Cinque Beast flapped in massive wings and charged forward. Its talons swooped forward swiftly amidst raging winds to grab the spirit stone in Hall Master Han's hand.

"Snatching? The heck!"

Chapter 495: Fearmongering

Hall Master Han felt dismal.

Over the past three years, regardless of what the other party wished for, he had definitely given his all to procuring it just to please the other party. All he wished was to earn the other party's gratitude so that the other party would consider their relationship when he tried to tame it...

Yet, this fellow forgot about their relationship as soon as a treasure appeared, and even went to the extent of snatching it...

The heck! Could he be any greedier than this?

If only he knew that the other party was so ungrateful, he would have never gone through so much trouble!

"Activate the formation!"

Judging from how the other party was ferociously charging at him, it probably didn't have any intention of stopping until it laid its claws on the middle-tier spirit stone. Knowing that this wasn't the time to get depressed, Hall Master Han bellowed.

Since the carrot didn't work... He could only utilize his final resort!

Forcing the other party to submit through violence!

This was the least preferable method due to the overwhelming strength of the Demon Cinque Beast. Even though the Beast Hall had the numerical advantage, capturing it alive was a terribly difficult task.

If not for such, Hall Master Han wouldn't have wasted his three years pleasing the other party.

While he was confident that he could convince the other party to submit through three years of relationship and the allure of profits, he still made preparations for the worst possible scenario... He had set up a formation here in advance in case something went wrong!

To think that he would really end up using it!

"Yes!"

Nodding their heads, the elders dashed off in four different directions, and driving the zhenqi in their body to the maximum, they grabbed at the air before them.

Boom!

At a distance several hundred meters in front of the crowd, a mist slowly drifted into appearance, catching the Demon Cinque Beast off guard. In its short moment of hesitation, the mist completely

surrounded it.

"It's a Confinement Formation!"

Having learned the Heaven's Path Formation Art, even without utilizing the Library of Heaven's Path, Zhang Xuan's comprehension of formations was comparable to a 4-star pinnacle formation master.

"Iron Chain Confinement Formation!"

Recognizing it, Jin Conghai's eyes narrowed.

"That's right!" Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

Iron Chain Confinement Formation was a formation created by a 4-star pinnacle formation master more than a thousand year ago. It made use of the violent spiritual energy in the natural surroundings to form overlapping iron chains that bound lifeforms trapped within its area of effect. Even struggling free of the chains was a huge hurdle, needless to say, escaping from the formation.

A grade-4 pinnacle Confinement Formation!

Staring at the impressive formation before him, Zhang Xuan remarked, "It seems like Hall Master Han is truly determined to capture this fellow!"

A formation of this level couldn't be set up on a whim. A formation master had to study the geographical terrain in advance to determine the various hiding spots for the formation flag. Afterward, he had to hide the formation flags underground without leaving the slightest trace so as to not incur the suspicion of the Demon Cinque Beast...

Even for a 4-star pinnacle formation master, it was impossible to achieve this without several months of preparation.

"Indeed. If I'm not mistaken, in the past three years, on top of pleasing this large fellow, he has made a lot of various preparations beneath the surface as well."

Hall Master Sai smiled bitterly.

Given the duration of time required to set up the formation and that the assistance of a 4-star pinnacle formation master was required, it seemed like his old buddy was determined to make this operation a success.

It was probably after he suffered a setback three years ago that he thought of this idea. On the surface, he did his best to please the Demon Cinque Beast, but in the shadows, he secretly hired others to set up this formation in case things didn't go as planned.

Zhang Xuan shrugged.

"It's perfectly normal for him to do this. A beast tamer must

always consider the possibility of failure. If he couldn't do this much, he couldn't have possibly become a 4-star beast tamer!"

Not even high-rank beast tamers could guarantee their taming to be successful every single time, especially when dealing with a ferocious and proud spirit beast.

Hall Master Han had already failed once. If he were to confront the Demon Cinque Beast without sufficient preparation in hopes of taming it, he wouldn't be worthy of his position as the head of the Beast Hall, a 4-star pinnacle beast tamer.

Roar!

While the group was chatting, the trapped Demon Cinque Beast realized that he had fallen for the other party's ploy and it howled furiously. It went on a rampage and destructive force shook the surroundings.

"It's futile!"

Hall Master Han harrumphed as he walked forward. With a flick of his wrist, a screen appeared in front of his crowd, reflecting the current circumstance of the Demon Cinque Beast.

At Transcendent Mortal 4-dan, its zhenqi had already evolved into Origin Energy, allowing it to utilize unimaginable means.

This screen was similar to the wall in the corridor housing the

Sea of Formations in the Formation Master Guild, allowing one to clearly view the situation within the formation, as well as serving as a platform to communicate with the prisoner inside.

The thick chains created through immense quantity of spiritual energy locked the Demon Cinque Beast firmly in place. The feared Demon Cinque Beast thrashed around violently, trying to free itself from its confines, but to no avail.

"I've already told you, it's futile! I advise you not to waste your strength!"

Hearing its frenzied howl, Hall Master Han chuckled lightly.

Roarrrrr!

Hearing those words, the rage of the Demon Cinque Beast crescendoed.

Three years of fellowship had made it lower its wariness toward the other party. Otherwise, how could it possibly overlook a formation that was set up at the entrance of its nest?

It didn't expect this to put it into a perilous situation. Resentment gushed through its mind like a huge torrent, and if looks could kill, Hall Master Han would have been torn into countless shreds by now.

"This is a grade-4 pinnacle formation. You might be powerful but

it'll be impossible for you to escape without knowing the correct method. Why don't we continue our previous conversation? As long as you promise to become my tamed beast, everything I've promised you before still holds. If not... I believe you should be more than aware of your current circumstances. It might be a pity to kill you, but you're no use to me otherwise," Hall Master Han said.

In truth, he didn't want to come to this step. Even if he were to successfully tame the Demon Cinque Beast after this, it would be impossible for him to win the heart of the latter. That would be equivalent to a potential threat hanging over his neck.

But the other party simply refused to submit to him, even going to the extent of snatching his item. Left with no choice, he could only resort to this.

Roarrrr!

Seething with anger, the Demon Cinque Beast glared at Hall Master Han with its massive eyes.

"You need not give me your answer so quickly. I have the time to wait for you!" Seeing its attitude, Hall Master Han shook his head. Even so, he wasn't anxious in the least.

Since the other party was already trapped, at the very most, he just had to expend more spirit stones to sustain the formation. No matter what, Hall Master Han was determined to tame the other party. Even though he had threatened to kill the other party, that

was more of a mean to coerce the other party into submission. After all, once the other party was killed, his three years of effort would have gone in vain.

Infuriated, the Demon Cinque Beast struggled. However, it wasn't able to struggle free of the iron chains which bound it tightly. Eventually, realizing that it couldn't free itself of its confines like that, it lay down and slowly closed his eyes.

"Hall master, what do we do?"

Seeing that the huge fellow had calmed down instead, the other elders stared at one another in confusion before walking up to Hall Master Han.

"What else can we do other than wait? Elder Hu, take out the Deerhorse Beast and roast it. Make sure that the aroma reaches the Demon Cinque Beast. I don't believe that gluttonous fellow can hold himself back when such delicacy is placed before him!" Hall Master Han said.

Even when raw, the Deerhorde Beast carried the deep aroma of herbs. Roasting it would surely whet one's appetite.

As an embodiment of gluttony, it would be a wonder if the Demon Cinque Beast could hold itself back.

Honestly speaking, Hall Master Han's mastery in the art of beast taming was truly formidable. The aroma of the Deerhorde Beast

was a clear contrast of the Demon Cinque Beast's current plight and the other possibility if it were to give in. This would surely gnaw at the other party's determination, luring it into submission...

An ordinary spirit beast would have surely given in at this point.

"Yes!" Elder Hu nodded. Just as he was about to start the fire to roast the Deerhorde Beast, the 2-star beast tamer from before shook his head with a helpless look and said impassively, "I advise you not to roast the Deerhorde Beast!"

Elder Hu frowned, "Why?"

Not expecting that a mere 2-star beast tamer would interfere in their affairs, Hall Master Han and the other elders stared at one another as displeasure appeared on their faces.

Even the least capable of them was a 4-star primary beast tamer, and it was common consensus that roasting the Deerhorde Beast was the best course of action at the moment. Otherwise, there would be nothing they could do... Yet, a 2-star beast tamer was dared to refute their decision?

"Nothing much, I just fear that the situation might evolve beyond your control if you were to roast it!"

Shaking his head, Zhang Xuan decided to say no more.

Even though he was a master teacher, he wasn't a Samaritan. There was no need for him to interfere in everything.

Besides, the other party seemed to be looking down on him.

"It's just the roasting of a Deerhorde Beast, what kind of situation could happen from it?" Seeing how the young lad wasn't able to back up his claim, Elder Hu harrumphed coldly.

Did he really take all of them 4-star beast tamers as fools? If catastrophe could really come from this, they would have long noticed it already before a mere 2-star beast tamer could.

"Forget it if you aren't willing to listen!" Zhang Xuan sighed.

He had done his part already. Since the other party was reluctant to listen, he wasn't willing to speak any further as well.

"Humph, seems like you're just a fearmongering, arrogant brat!"

Elder Hu flung his sleeves.

The others also didn't seem too pleased by Zhang Xuan's comment.

This was especially so for Hall Master Han. If not in consideration that the other party was Hall Master Sai's friend, he would have surely lashed out already.

What did a mere 2-star beast tamer know to dare to speak up on their affairs? How boorish!

"Enough, go and roast the Deerhorde Beast!"

With a cold expression, Hall Master Han waved his hands.

Initially, he still held some considerations over the other party given how Hall Master Sai addressed the other party as his friend. However, from the looks of it now, he was just a rude liar.

The situation might evolve beyond control? It was just the roasting of a Deerhorde Beast, what could happen? Other than testing a person's tolerance, what else could possibly happen?

"Yes!"

Nodding his head, Elder Hu, along with some of elders, stacked up some firewood and started roasting the Deerhorde Beast.

As beast tamers, they often had to camp in the wilderness for many days to lay in wait for a savage beast. Thus, it was inevitable that they would pick up such basic survival skills.

Hu hu hu!

Soon, the campfire was lit and the Deerhorde Beast was placed on

top. Tzzzzzz, sizzling sound echoed as a deep aroma began wafting in the area.

Roasting the Deerhorde Beast, which had lived by feeding off spirit herbs, further brought out the fragrance hidden in its body. The roasting had just barely begun, but the crowd was already salivating.

"Let's retreat!"

Catching a whiff of the fragrance, Zhang Xuan shook his head.

"Retreat?" Hall Master Sai and the others were taken aback.

"Un. We should be at least several hundred meters away or else we might be implicated as well!"

Saying so nonchalantly, Zhang Xuan took the lead and retreated away from the Deerhorde Beast.

As soon as he walked away, Zhao Ya, Zhao Feiwu, and the others hurriedly followed along.

Hall Master Sai was put in a position, but after hesitating for a moment, he chose to tag along as well.

"These fellows..."

Seeing how the group turned around and left, saying that they might be implicated, bulging veins appeared on Hall Master Han's forehead, and he nearly erupted.

Failing to tame that huge fellow had already filled him with rage, and the depressing words of this fellow were threatening to ignite his rage.

You are just a 2-star beast tamer! To act as though an unfathomable expert with that deep expression of yours... Why don't you just become an actor?!

Chapter 496: Bizarre Happenings

Truthfully, if it had been any other 2-star beast tamer that said such words, Hall Master Han surely wouldn't have gotten angry.

What triggered him was... the expression of that fellow who spoke. The other party acted as though he would surely suffer if he didn't heed his words. Not to mention, the contempt in his eyes couldn't be any more apparent...

To think that a 4-star pinnacle beast tamer like him would be looked in contempt by a young lad... Contempt your head!

This Demon Cinque Beast possesses the Dragon Bloodline, resulting in its proud nature. It's normal to be unable to tame it. Do you really think that I wished to go this far? It's precisely because there's no better solution that I'm doing this!

Hmph! Conceited!

It sure is a wonder why Hall Master Sai would become friends with someone like you.

"Don't bother about them, focus on the roasting instead. The more aromatic it is, the better!"

Suppressing his rage, Hall Master Han instructed.

"Yes!" Elder Hu and the others nodded, and they increased the intensity of the flame. The aroma of the Deerhorde Beast immediately grew deeper, inducing groans of protest from one's stomach.

...

While that group was about to erupt from rage, Zhang Xuan and the others stopped at a distance several hundred meters away.

"This will do!" Zhang Xuan waved his hands.

"Zhang shi..." The crowd turned to look at him with questioning gazes.

They had absolute trust in Zhang shi's capability. Since he had said that something was going to happen, there was a high chance that something would happen.

"Is Zhang shi worried about a stampede occurring?"

A thought flashed past Hall Master Sai's mind and he frowned. "Given how the aroma of the Deerhorde Beast is diffusing in the surroundings and considering the irresistible appeal of it to the spirit beasts, it is highly likely that a large group of spirit beasts might be attracted into the area... But... if a stampede is going to occur, won't we still be caught in it at this distance?"

Under the charge of thousands and thousands of savage beasts,

all life forms would be torn to shreds. If a stampede were to really occur, even if they were to escape several dozen kilometers away, they would still be caught within it.

"Ah! That seems possible!"

Everyone also came to a realization.

What Hall Master Sai said made sense. There was indeed a high probability of a stampede occurring. Such a matter had occurred in Coax Ridge before so this wasn't an unfounded worry.

Given the aroma from the Deerhorde Beast, it wouldn't be surprising if spirit beasts were lured in. But if it was such a situation, shouldn't they run away as far as possible? Wouldn't it be courting death if they chose to remain here?

"A stampede? You sure have wild imaginations!"

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan was speechless. "Since even you all can tell that other spirit beasts could be lured in by the aroma of the Deerhorde Beast, do you all think that a group of 4-star beast tamers would neglect this possibility?"

"This..."

The crowd's faces immediately turned red.

That was indeed true. Since even outsiders like them could tell that much, how could 4-star beast tamer veterans neglect such a possibility?

Since the other party could even foresee the rejection of the Demon Cinque Beast and prepared countermeasures in advance, they must be prepared for the possibility of a stampede occurring already.

"Don't worry, such a thing can't possibly happen!" Zhang Xuan shook his head.

"Why?" Zhao Feiwu was bewildered.

Even humans like them found it hard to hold themselves back before the allure of the Deerhorde Beast, how could spirit beasts possibly resist it?

Seeing how the usually astute 'gongzi' asked such an obvious question, Zhang Xuan rolled his eyes. "Even though the Deerhorde Beast is very aromatic, how far do you think the smell can diffuse to?"

"This..." Zhao Feiwu was immediately stumped.

There was no doubt about the allure of the meat, but at their current distance, the aroma was already barely discernible. If they were to go any further, it would be completely undetectable already. Even though spirit beasts possessed far stronger senses of

smell than humans, it would still be impossible for them to discern a smell several kilometers away.

"Besides, where do you think we are? We are on the territory of the Demon Cinque Beast! Even if other spirit beasts were to catch a whiff of the aroma, do you think that they would dare to gather here?" Zhang Xuan continued.

"Ah..." Zhao Feiwu blushed in embarrassment.

Powerful spirit beasts and savage beasts demarcated their own territories, and weaker beasts wouldn't dare to step into their boundaries. After all, the moment they stepped past the boundary, there was a high chance they would be killed as a prey. The Demon Cinque Beast could be considered as the strongest spirit beast throughout the entire Nine Folds Mountain. Given the duration it had lived here, how could there be any nearby beasts who still dared to trespass on its territory?

Wasn't that courting death?

"If I'm not mistaken, in a ten kilometer radius where the Demon Cinque Beast lives, there won't be any other spirit beasts. No matter how aromatic the Deerhorde Beast is, it's impossible for it cause an uproar among spirit beasts beyond ten kilometers away!" Zhang Xuan explained.

"Ten kilometers?" Only then did everyone finally came to a realization.

Stopping two kilometers away, it was true that they hadn't spotted any spirit beasts along the way. Even though they had noticed a few footprints, they were sparse. Most probably, those belonged to spirit beasts who accidentally wandered into the area and fled hurriedly after smelling the Demon Cinque Beast's scent.

Otherwise, given that they were a large group, it was odd that not a single spirit beast had come forward to pester them.

No matter how aromatic the Deerhorde Beast was, it was impossible for a spirit beast that was ten kilometers away to smell it. And even if one did, would it dare to walk in here?

This was the territory of the strongest spirit beast in the Nine Folds Mountain!

It was no wonder why Hall Master Han had no fear. He probably already knew in advance that it was impossible for a stampede to occur.

"But if it isn't a stampede... What other situation could happen?"

Eventually, they returned back to the original question.

"Look on, you'll understand soon enough!" Zhang Xuan didn't explain the matter.

Since Zhang Xuan was unwilling to speak, the others didn't think that it was appropriate to question him further.

At that point, Hall Master Sai suddenly requested awkwardly, "If there's any danger, I beseech Zhang shi to save Hall Master Han. The only reason why he snubs you is because he doesn't know of your capability. In truth, he isn't a bad person..."

No matter what, Hall Master Han was his friend. He couldn't possibly watch on nonchalantly if the other party was in danger.

"Un, if something really happens, I'll help him. However, I just fear that they might not be happy if I do make a move!" Chuckling softly, Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up. "Alright, you all should continue watching. It should be about time!"

Hearing those words, the crowd turned their sights to the front.

At this point, the cooking of the Deerhorde Beast was about to be finished. The aroma had already reached an unbearable level.

These elders were all skilled in outdoor survival skills, and they had brought some seasoning along with them for this operation. Even though it was abrupt, their skills weren't inferior even to the top chefs of Honghai City. Not just the aroma and the taste, even the tone of the meat was perfect. Just the sight of it was enough to induce uncontrolled salivation in one.

"Brother Demon Cinque, can you smell it? If you become my tamed beast, this will be yours. Besides, you only have to stay by my side so there's nothing for you to lose. Once my lifespan reaches its end, you'll be free once more. What else is there to

consider?"

Knowing that the aroma had already permeated through the entire formation, Hall Master Han continued, "Hurry up and make your decision or else, we'll be eating the Deerhorde Beast by ourselves. By then, it'll be too late! I believe that you should know the value of the Deerhorde Beast as well. This is the only one in the entire Nine Folds Mountain, and once you miss it, you'll surely regret it for life!"

Hall Master Han's words were indeed very persuasive, any other spirit beast would have already been convinced by now. However, the eyes of the Demon Cinque Beast were still tightly shut, and it remained completely motionless. It seemed as though it was asleep.

"When did the Demon Cinque Beast become so docile?"

At this moment, Zhao Feiwu also realized that something was wrong.

According to the legends passed down in the Myraid Kingdom Alliance, this fellow was ferocious and savage. Back then, someone had also tried to use a formation to trap it. However, it was a pity that the stamina of the Demon Cinque Beast seemed to know no limits. Soon, under its struggling, the spirit stones in the formation ran dry and it broke out of the formation!

Formations could be sustained by both spiritual energy in the surroundings and spiritual energy from spirit stones. The former

would require a long charging period for the formation to be sustained whereas the latter only demanded sufficient spirit stones.

But regardless which of the two it was, formations required an energy input to sustain it. To cope with the struggling of the prisoner, it would have to expend a greater amount of energy. Once the spirit stones ran dry, even if one didn't know the exact method to break the formation, the formation would still crumble by itself.

This was precisely the reason why the corridor of the Formation Master Guild had a time limit of two hours.

If not, as long as the examinee struggled, it would just be a matter of time before the energy in the formation ran dry... Breaking out of the formation under such circumstances wouldn't be a test of one's skill.

Despite the ferocious nature of the Demon Cinque Beast before, it chose to lie down as though an obedient child. Even though it was interested in the Deerhorde Beast before, there wasn't any signs of it wanting to break out of the formation... This was contrary to its nature.

"Hall master, it's done!"

Just as everyone was puzzled, Elder Hu and the others were done cooking the Deerhorde Beast. The golden spirit beast meat and the deep aroma made it irresistible to all.

"Good, bring it over!"

Hall Master Han nodded.

Elder Hu and the others nodded as they brought the cooked Deerhorde Beast flesh over.

"Do you see that? If you were to hesitate any longer, we'll be digging in..."

Hall Master Han chuckled as he turned his gaze to the Deerhorde Beast. Just as he was about to pick it up to entice the other party, his eyes suddenly widened in astonishment and he erupted. "What the heck is this! Who in the world ate it?"

"Ate it?"

Everyone turned their sights over, only to see the previously intact Deerhorde Beast missing a limb. Only a trail of bones hung limply on the body.

In other words... someone had secretly eaten one of the limbs!

Hall Master Han was frenzied.

Who in the world was the one who ate the Deerhorde Beast?

Even though he kept saying that they were going to dig in, it was actually just a method to coax the Demon Cinque Beast. If they were to really eat it, the possibility of taming it would drop to zero.

In other words, he was just saying it, it was impossible for him to really do it. Why... in the blink of an eye did a limb suddenly go missing? Not to mention, not the slightest piece of meat was left on the limb.

Aren't you all going too far? Don't you all know how much effort I have put into taming this fellow?

Hall Master Han glared coldly at Elder Hu and the others.

Hall Master Sai and that infuriating 2-star beast tamer had left as soon as the roasting process started so it was impossible for them to be the culprit. The only plausible suspects were the elders standing before him.

"Hall master, we... didn't do it!"

Being glared at by the other party, Elder Hu and the other leaped in shock. They hurriedly shook their hands in denial.

They had been swallowing their saliva and suppressing their agitation while roasting it, not daring to nibble the slightest bit of it. They were also baffled by how a limb went missing all of a sudden?

"You didn't do it? Are you saying that the flesh flew away by itself?"

Hall Master Han lashed out.

What kind of teammates did I find... I asked you all to roast the meat to entice the Demon Cinque Beast into submission and yet you all ended up feasting on it yourself...

What is wrong with you all!

"Hall master, it really isn't us. I can swear to that..."

Seeing that the hall master didn't believe them, Elder Hu raised his palm to vow to the heavens when he suddenly froze, and his expression slowly warped in shock. "Hall master..."

"What's wrong?"

Hearing the sudden exclamation, Hall Master Han traced Elder Hu's gaze back to the Deerhorde Beast meat and he nearly spurted a mouthful of blood.

The Deerhorde Beast, which was initially missing one limb, was missing two now. Staring at the bare bone hanging off its body, an air of eeriness floated in the area.

Chapter 497: The Pummeled Hall Master Han

"Who was it?"

Looking around, Hall Master Han raised his hands warily.

At that moment, it was clear that it wasn't Elder Hu and the others who'd eaten the Deerhorde Beast.

But... other than them, who else could it be? Who in the world could eat the Deerhorde Beast without his notice?

This was way too sinister!

"Hall Master, look!" Elder Hu pointed.

Lowering his head, Hall Master Han immediately realized what was going on. Unknowingly, a dense layer of golden worms had crawled onto the Deerhorde Beast. They were each around the size of an ant, and wherever they passed by, the meat would vanish, leaving behind only bones.

Clearly, the two limbs were cleared away by these insects.

These worms were extremely small, and their color resembled the tone of the roasted flesh. Thus, if one didn't pay close attention, it was easy to overlook them.

"What... are those?"

Hall Master Han was taken aback.

Despite being a 4-star beast tamer, he realized that he had never seen those worms before.

"Hall master, could these be..."

Suddenly recalling something, Elder Hu's body froze and fear reflected in his eyes.

"You're saying that..." Seeing the other party's expression, Hall Master Han froze for a moment before fear slowly crept onto his face.

"Yes. Otherwise, how could any creature consume the flesh of the Deerhorde Beast so quickly..." Elder Hu swallowed a mouthful of saliva.

"If it's really that thing... we could really be in trouble!"

Suddenly recalling something, Hall Master Han lifted his head and looked at the screen, only to see the eyes of the Demon Cinque Beast wide opened, gleaming with energy.

The edges of its gigantic lips suddenly curled up coldly.

...

"Zhang shi, what is that?"

Upon seeing that bizarre sight, Hall Master Sai couldn't help but ask.

As the head of the Appraiser Hall, his knowledge pool was formidable, but even so, he had never heard of such a bizarre creature.

The others also turned their gazes over.

Zhang shi had predicted this would happen and brought them over. From the looks of it, this must be what he was worried about.

"They're Soul Devouring Ants," Zhang Xuan said with a grim expression.

"Soul Devouring Ants?"

The crowd was bewildered.

They had never heard of them before, needless to say, know what they were.

However, as soon as Luo Zhu heard that name, his body immediately froze and disbelief surfaced on his face. "Legend has it that these ants are the nemeses of soul oracles. They are beings who sustain themselves by consuming souls and spiritual energy..."

Soul Devouring Ants were bizarre creatures who were capable of devouring soul and spiritual energy.

As such, they were the nemeses of soul oracles.

Why would such insects be found near the cave of the Demon Cinque Beast?

Instead of replying his words, Zhang Xuan turned his head over and asked, "If I'm not mistaken, the soul oracle tomb that you are talking of is located under the lake, am I right?"

"You... How did you know?"

Luo Zhu was taken aback.

He had only said that the soul oracle tomb was in the vicinity. He had never revealed the exact location, so how in the world did the other party know about it?

Tombs were all about geomancy, and being buried beneath a lake was commonly known to be inauspicious. No one in the right mind would choose to do so.

Thus, if one were to tell another that there was a tomb underwater, one would definitely be mocked by others.

Back then, when he looked up the relevant books and found its exact location, he was still in disbelief.

This was the reason why he was so confident that no one could have found it.

However... the person before him pointed out the matter in an instant. Could it be really related to these Soul Devouring Ants?

"Soul Devouring Ants live by consuming souls, thus making them the nemeses of soul oracles. However... these things fear water, so the only way to avoid them and not be devoured by them is to be buried underwater," Zhang Xuan said.

The books that Hall Master Sai gathered on soul oracles might not have had much useful knowledge, but it still provided some basic knowledge for Zhang Xuan to work with.

Besides, Soul Devouring Ant was a type of spirit beast recorded in the books of the Beast Tamer Guild. After looking at the ground with his Eye of Insight, he had already noticed some peculiarities.

With some deduction, he swiftly understood the situation.

"Isn't being buried underwater inauspicious for both the living and the dead?" The one who asked the question wasn't Luo Zhu but Zhao Feiwu.

Learning that the tomb was beneath the lake had left her astounded.

She had spotted the lake as soon as she arrived in the area, and under the ceaseless torrent from the waterfall throughout the years, its current depth was unimaginable. To build one's tomb at the bottom of it, wouldn't one be afraid of one's resting place being washed away by the water, unable to rest in peace even after death?

"To the soul oracles, they could always possess another physical body to come alive again. Death was nothing more than a temporary sleep to them, and geomancy and the like didn't apply to them. Thus, it didn't matter where they built their tomb," Zhang Xuan explained.

"Oh!" The crowd came to a realization.

The main reason why tombs were placed at a location viewed to be auspicious was in hopes that they could bring luck to their future offspring. However, soul oracles didn't think that death was permanent to them, and thus, it didn't matter to them where their tomb was located.

"But that's not right!"

After a moment of hesitation, Luo Zhu suddenly recalled something and said, "Even though the soul oracle tomb is located beneath the lake, it isn't submerged in water at all. Thus, even if the Soul Devouring Ants are unable to step into the water, they should be able to enter the tomb by burrowing their way into it. Then why..."

If the soul oracle tomb were submerged in water, he wouldn't have been able to explore it, and wouldn't have been possessed by a soul within the tomb. That day, when he entered the underground tomb, even though it had been sealed for innumerable years, the air was dry and permitted one to breathe.

Since even humans could enter the tomb, Soul Devouring Ants would surely be able to do the same as well! If that was the case, how could the soul have survived there for so many years?

"If I'm not mistaken, you are the one who brought all of these Soul Devouring Ants over!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Me?" Luo Zhu was taken aback.

Even though he had heard of Soul Devouring Ants, he had never met one in his life before. How could he possibly be the one who brought them over?

"The soul oracle tomb is tightly sealed. For innumerable years, it remained secluded from the outside world. However, not only did you open the tomb, you even came out with a soul on you. Naturally, the scent of the souls leaked out... As such, these fellows

who specially prey on souls were attracted here. However, due to the limited time of their arrival, they haven't found the entrance yet. If we had delayed for another month, then even if we were to enter, we surely wouldn't be able to find anything at all!" Zhang Xuan said with a grim expression.

Soul Devouring Ants were the nemeses of the soul oracles, so naturally, soul oracles learned how to guard against them. They knew how to prevent the scent of their souls from leaking out and prevent bringing attention upon themselves.

However, Luo Zhu didn't. If Zhang Xuan wasn't mistaken, these Soul Devouring Ants had probably arrived not too long ago. Otherwise, they would have already burrowed beneath the deep lake instead of loitering around the surface and wouldn't have been attracted by the aroma of the Deerhorde Beast.

"This..." Luo Zhu's face paled.

He was actually the one who brought those fearsome things here... Just the thought of it sent shivers down his spine.

Recovering from his shock, Luo Zhu suddenly thought of something and asked doubtfully, "Even though Soul Devouring Ants favor consuming soul and the meat of the Deerhorde Beast, there shouldn't have needed to escape so far, right? Under normal circumstances, those ants won't harm humans, right?"

Soul Devouring Ants were bizarre and abhorrent creatures, and they were the nemesis of the soul oracles. However, to ordinary

humans, they were completely harmless.

Was there a need for them to escape several hundred meters away?

"You're right in that the Soul Devouring Ants won't do any harm to us. However... you mustn't forget that on top of consuming souls, these insects consume spiritual energy as well, and... what a formation primarily drives on is precisely... spiritual energy!" Zhang Xuan explained.

"Formation?"

Taken aback, everyone was stunned for a moment before their eyes slowly narrowed. They hurriedly turned their gazes over.

...

"Damn it!"

Seeing the opened eyes of the Demon Cinque Beast, Hall Master Han also realized that something was amiss and his body tensed up.

Given that the Soul Devouring Ant was hidden underground, even though he was a beast tamer, it wasn't too surprising for him to have failed to notice it. However, the Demon Cinque Beast was different.

Spirit beasts were exceptionally sensitive to their surroundings, not to mention, this was its nest. Thus, how could it possibly be unaware of the arrival of these 'guests'?

It seemed like it knew that those 'guests' would be attracted by the scent of the Deerhorde Beast, and knowing their ability to consume spiritual energy, it was without fear. That was why it chose to close its eyes, lie low, and wait.

The moment the spiritual energy of the formation had been completely consumed by those Soul Devouring Ants, the formation would be like a carriage without a steed. Without a driving force, how could it possibly operate?

Upon thinking of all this, Hall Master Han hurriedly instructed, "Increase the energy and reinforce the formation..."

However, before he could finish his words, a furious howl echoed. The trapped Demon Cinque Beast suddenly moved, causing the ground to tremor.

Huala!

The spiritual energy chains locking it, as though having been nibbled on by something, broke apart in an instant. After which, an incomparably powerful aura gushed out from the body of the spirit beast. Both its wings flapped furiously and it flew out of the formation,

Hu!

The formation collapsed entirely, and the mist shielding everyone's view disappeared. Following which, everyone saw the massive body of the Demon Cinque Beast charging straight toward Elder Hu and the others.

Roar!

A furious bellow.

Flapping its wings, huge gusts of wind were whipped up.

"What?"

Before Elder Hu and the others could react, they were already struck and sent flying. Blood spewed from their mouths in midair.

A Transcendent Mortal 4-dan pinnacle spirit beast was typically already stronger than human cultivators of the same level. On top of that, it was just captured and forced to submit. All of the resentment accumulated in its heart caused it to go into a rampaging state. How could the elders of the Beast Hall withstand against such might?

In just a single move, all of them were already injured.

"Damn it!"

Not expecting this fellow to be so callous, disregarding their three years of relationship, Hall Master Han's face steeled. Raising his hand, a long spear appeared in his grip.

Even though he was a beast tamer, his fighting prowess as an individual was formidable as well. He had already reached Transcendent Mortal 4-dan pinnacle as well.

As soon as the spear left his hand, it immediately charged forward as though a mighty dragon, headed straight for the Demon Cinque Beast.

Facing the offense, the Demon Cinque Beast didn't even bother to dodge. He simply faced it straight with his physical body.

Ding ding!

The incomparably sharp spear came into contact with the Demon Cinque Beast's chest, but it failed to even pierce through the latter's skin, needless to say, it was unable injure the beast.

"What formidable defense..."

Zhang Xuan, Hall Master Sai, and the others stared at one another with widened eyes.

They knew that the spirit beast's Dragon Bloodline had granted it unparalleled defense among its peers, and ordinary weapons couldn't hope to overcome it. Even so, that was an attack which Hall Master Han had placed his full might into. It was a shocking sight to see that it didn't even leave the slightest mark.

It was no wonder why its notoriety would be known throughout the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance, and why the multiple attempts of the royal family in eliminating it ended up in failure. It was indeed a force to reckon with.

Roar!

After deflecting the spear with its chest, the Demon Cinque Beast roared furiously. Its powerful voice enveloped the area with rampaging might reminiscent of a storm.

At the forefront, Hall Master Han bore the brunt of the attack. Despite being a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan pinnacle, he still felt a little faint-headed and nearly spurted a mouthful of blood.

Hu la!

After the roar, the Demon Cinque Beast swept its massive wings.

A cloud of dust immediately rose into the air, and a massive tear appeared on the ground. Hall Master Han swiftly summoned its spear back to protect himself. Even so, the disparity in the strength of both parties was too great. With a numbing sensation in his

arm, he was sent flying as though a ball being kicked into the distance.

Pu!

Even in midair, blood kept gushing out of his mouth, causing his face turn ghastly pale.

With his internals rattled by the overwhelming force that struck him, Hall Master Han felt as though his body was tearing apart. At this very moment, a thought suddenly emerged in his mind.

'Did the 2-star beast tamer... predict that this would happen?'

Chapter 498: Despairing Hall Master Han

The 2-star beast tamer had advised him against roasting the Deerhorde Beast, and thinking that it was impossible, he refused to listen to the other party's advice. As such, the other party left along with his group for fear of being implicated in the trouble. Initially, he thought that the fellow was just fearmongering but to think that trouble really occurred out of it.

Could it be that he had actually predicted the appearance of the Soul Devouring Ants, the collapse of the formation, and the current, disastrous situation?

"That's impossible! Soul Devouring Ants are extremely rare spirit beasts. Even I was unable make the link out of the blue. How can such a young 2-star beast tamer possibly have foreseen this?"

Even though he knew that it likely was the truth, he still found the entire matter too hard to believe.

In ancient times, Soul Devouring Ants were the nemeses of the soul oracles. But ever since that era had passed, the entire species had disappeared from sight for a very long time. As such, very few people knew about their natural habitat, characteristics, and such.

How could such a young beast tamer possibly discern so much within a few short minutes?

Even 5-star beast tamers didn't possess such means!

This thought disappeared as soon as it appeared in his mind. Even if he wished to pursue the matter, the current circumstance didn't allow for it.

Landing on the ground, he suppressed the stifled sensation in his chest and straightened his back. Then, flicking his spear in his hands, he looked at the massive savage beast and said, "Brother Demon Cinque, no matter what, we have been together for three years. You should understand my character very well. I have no intentions of hurting you at all. How about this, why don't we just forget about this matter... Let's continue to get along as equal peers... Y-you... Stop! Why are you still charging here?"

Before he could finish his words, the massive figure appeared right before him once more. Raising its claws, it struck down on him.

Peng!

Blocking it with his spear, Hall Master Han was knocked backward once more.

Even though they were both at Transcendent Mortal 4-dan pinnacle, there was an irreconcilable disparity in their strength. He wasn't a match for the other party at all.

"Don't force me! Did you think that the formation was my only trump card... Shit!" Having been attacked relentlessly by the other party, Hall Master Han's chest ached from the heavy blows

directed at him. Infuriated, he lashed out.

However, before he could finish his lashing, he was struck once more by the wing of the Demon Cinque Beast. He was sent rotating several rounds in the air before crashing heavily down.

At this moment, Hall Master Han felt extremely dismal.

If only he'd known that the roasting of the Deerhorde Beast would attract the Soul Devouring Ants and destroy the formation, he would have never done so!

In the end, not only did the Deerhorde Beast become a gift to the Soul Devouring Ants, the target he was aiming to tame was also in a berserk state. It seemed as though the other party would never rest as long as he was still breathing.

He snuck a glance at the 2-star beast tamer, Hall Master Sai, and the others, and this single glance nearly caused another mouthful of blood to spurt from his mouth.

At a distance several hundred meters away, the young man from before was looking at him leisurely as he lectured his students.

"Do you all see that? This is the consequence of not listening to the advice of others. In the future, when you all explore the world by your own, make sure to remain humble and keep an open mind to the words of others... In any case, just don't be like him!

"Also, even though that previous move of his looked incredible, it's actually a complete failure. If he had launched that attack half a breath earlier, the Demon Cinque Beast's movements would surely have been interrupted... To be able to use perfectly fine moves to such an extent, his fighting techniques are truly mediocre!

"Thus, you all must train your battle techniques diligently. Don't always think about conquering this and that. Rather than wasting your time on such immaterial accomplishments, you should work hard on raising your fighting prowess..."

...

The young man commented as he lectured his students.

Hearing those words, Hall Master Han's eyebrows leaped furiously. If he could, he would've charged forward to pummel that young man.

The heck!

I am a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan pinnacle expert, the head of the Beast Hall! Why, in the view of an insignificant figure like you, did I suddenly become a person incapable of anything at all?

But... what left him even more frustrated was that... analyzing the other party's words carefully, he realized that the other party's words were actually spot-on. Even if he wanted to refute those words, he had no idea where he could start from.

"There is something bizarre about that fellow. When I'm done dealing with the Demon Cinque Beast, I will have to ask Hall Master Sai about it!"

No matter how foolish he was, it was clear that the young man was extraordinary. Most probably, he must have noticed something in advance, that's why he spoke those words.

However, this wasn't the time to be conflicted over this matter. Twisting his body, he dodged the Demon Cinque Beast's offense and raised his head.

"Brother Demon Cinque, since you refuse to agree to my offer of reconciliation, don't blame me for getting nasty!"

After which, he took a breath and flicked his hands.

While he was being continuously forced back by the Demon Cinque Beast, Elder Hu and the others had been making preparations.

Even though they had been knocked away by the Demon Cinque Beast, those were mainly superficial injuries. A moment of meditation was more than sufficient to get them back to their full strength. Upon hearing those words, they immediately got into position and drew their weapons.

Huala!

Their aura harmonized together as one, forming a collaborative offense formation.

"It's the same formation as the one the younger beast tamers used previously. However, this one is much more profound and stronger!"

From afar, Zhang Xuan couldn't help but nod his head.

It was a rare opportunity to view the battle among Transcendent Mortal 4-dan experts. Naturally, he should explain the entire battle to Zhao Ya and the others so that they could learn from it and improve.

"Indeed. This formation further augments their individual strength, allowing their battle prowess to soar several folds!" Jin Conghai nodded.

Even when crossing hands with the younger beast tamers outside, if not for his experience and superior cultivation, it would definitely be difficult for him to triumph over them.

Since even the juniors were already so powerful, not much had to be said about the seniors who had immersed themselves into the formation for such a long period of time. Not to mention, their cultivation realms were also far superior, resulting in a vast difference in the might of both formations!

"If they were the ones whom we were facing previously, even if there were eight of us facing them, we still wouldn't have had the strength to retaliate at all!" Taking a glance, Hall Master Sai couldn't help but remark.

The reason why the both of them could suppress the formation of the young beast tamers previously wasn't because the formation was weak but because their cultivation far exceeded that of the other party. On top of that, the young beast tamers weren't familiar with the collaborative offensive formation either.

But Hall Master Han, Elder Hu, and the others didn't have such a flaw at all. It was clear that they had practiced the formation for several years already, and every single move of theirs had a deep intention behind it. On top of that, their teamwork was exquisite, so as soon as the formation was executed, their fighting prowess immediately soared to formidable heights, thus exerting a huge pressure on the Demon Cinque Beast.

Awed, Hall Master Sai commented, "So, this is his true trump card! For the formation to be so powerful, it seems like they began practicing this collaborative formation straight after the failure three years ago!"

The Confinement Formation they used previously was formidable, but what if the other party was determined not to give in? Eventually, it would just be a matter of time before the formation ran out of power and the Demon Cinque Beast was let loose.

Thus, Hall Master Sai was perplexed as to whether Hall Master

Han had any backup plan to deal with this situation. From the looks of it now, this seemed to be it.

The collaborative formation made up of the several elders harnessed immense power, making them a match for even a Transcendent Mortal 5-dan primary stage expert. Dealing with a 4-dan pinnacle Demon Cinque Beast shouldn't be much of a problem.

"Do you think that... they can win?"

Seeing through Hall Master Sai's thoughts, Zhang Xuan chuckled.

"Their teamwork is flawless, and the might of the formation is also formidable. They should be able to suppress the Demon Cinque Beast entirely!" Hall Master Sai said.

As a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan expert, he was able to gauge of the fighting prowess of these elders accurately.

The collaborative offensive formation was profound and it augmented the strengths of every single individual in it. No matter how powerful the Demon Cinque Beast, it would be hard for it to withstand the combined might of the group.

"Should be able to?" Zhang Xuan shook his head. "Since they have their trump card, what makes you think that the Demon Cinque Beast doesn't have one? If a single collaborative offensive formation could bring it down, it would have been eliminated by

the forces dispatched by the Myriad Kingdom Alliance long ago!"

Back then, even the many experts sent by the Myriad Kingdom Alliance ended in failure. To even entertain the thought that a single formation could subdue this Demon Cinque Beast was a gross underestimation of its ability.

"Besides, this is in fact a Slaughter Formation. However, given that Hall Master Han is reluctant to kill the Demon Cinque Beast in hopes of taming it, his movements will be severely limited. This will prevent them from bringing out the full might of the formation!"

After studying the Heaven's Path Formation Art, Zhang Xuan's understanding of formations had reached an astounding level.

Even though he didn't know the name of the collaborative offensive formation, he could accurately discern its properties and might.

Hall Master Han was too focused on taming the Demon Cinque Beast, and this would cause him to subconsciously hold back in his offense. In other words, he was treating this Slaughter Formation as a Confinement Formation... With the might of the formation greatly reduced, it was just a matter of time before the group fell apart.

And just like Zhang Xuan had said, initially, Hall Master Han and the others had the upper hand. However, as the Demon Cinque Beast gave up on its defense altogether and attacked recklessly, the

formation was swiftly torn apart.

Pu pu pu pu!

A few minutes later, the elders were swept away by the wing of the Demon Cinque Beast and incurred heavy injuries. They spat out huge mouthfuls of blood.

Peng!

Eventually, under one of the attacks from the Demon Cinque Beast, Hall Master Han's spear was knocked out of his hand, and he crashed onto the ground.

Hu!

After breaking the formation, the furious Demon Cinque Beast immediately stomped its massive foot on Hall Master Han.

If Hall Master Han were to be really stepped on by that humongous figure, no matter how powerful he was, it would be difficult for him to escape from his demise.

"You..."

Seeing that his life was at risk, Hall Master Han bore with the intense pain pricking at his body and got up. Summoning the strength he had into his palm, he prepared to receive the other

party's blow.

Peng!

The foot came into contact with his palm, and for a moment, there was a stalemate.

However, the pressure on the foot only grew stronger and stronger. Just as Hall Master Han was coming to the verge of his endurance, and he thought that he would be reduced into meat paste, an anxious voice shouted, "Zhang shi, I beseech you to save Hall Master Han!"

The one who spoke was Hall Master Sai.

After years of being friends, he couldn't bear seeing his old friend dying before him. However, he knew the extent of his ability well. He wasn't even a match for his old buddy, needless to say, this monster that could easily subdue him.

Thus, the only option left was to request for Zhang shi's help.

Zhang Xuan's cultivation was far beneath his, but after the past few days of interaction, he found himself being continuously shocked by the other party's miraculous means. Perhaps, he might have a solution to save his old buddy.

"I am not a match for the Demon Cinque Beast either, how do you expect me to save him?"

However, contrary to his expectations, the young man gave a negative reply.

Hearing those words, Hall Master Han despaired.

He thought that three years of fellowship and the various hands he had prepared beforehand would allow this operation to end in success. Never in his dreams did he expect for this fellow's strength to be far beyond his, resulting in a completely one-sided fight!

"Please, you must have a solution... Otherwise, if the Demon Cinque Beast were to kill Hall Master Han, it'll definitely come for us next..." Hall Master Sai pleaded anxiously.

"Oh, I do have a solution!" The nonchalant voice of the young man sounded.

"What is it?" Hall Master Sai asked in agitation.

Hall Master Han's body also tightened. Seeing a ray of hope, he immediately pricked his ears to listen closer.

"Simple, we just have to ask this fellow to release him!" the young man said.

Pu!

Having his ray of hope abruptly crushed, Hall Master Han spurted a mouthful of blood and fell into despair.

Chapter 499: Taming the Demon Cinque Beast

Release him?

Aren't you spouting the obvious? Who doesn't know that that is the most direct method... However, look at how furious this fellow is! It seems as though it is ready to murder anyone, do you think that it's possible for it to release him?

Trapping the other party and using a collaborative offensive formation, this had already created an irreconcilable grudge between the two. At this moment, the Demon Cinque Beast couldn't wait to kill the latter to vent his resentment. Release? You must be joking!

He thought that since this young man was able to predict the appearance of the Soul Devouring Ants, he might just be able to come up with a brilliant situation to save him. To think that he would be so unreliable as well!

Asking for the Demon Cinque Beast to release him would probably only hasten his death!

Depressed, Hall Master Han gave up all hope. At that moment, he heard Hall Master Sai's voice sound.

"Release? What do you need, I'll go make preparations now!"

"There's no need for any preparations. As long as I tame that fellow and make it my tamed beast, it will surely listen to my words," the young man said nonchalantly.

"Tame it and make it your tamed beast?" Hall Master Han's vision went dark, and for a moment, it felt as though he had seen all wonders in life.

Over the course of the past three years, the treasures which he had presented to the Demon Cinque Beast could already make up a massive mountain. Not to mention, for this operation, he had used the Deerhorde Beast, middle-tier spirit stone, and various other treasures to entice it. Even so, the Demon Cinque Beast didn't even consider accepting the offer in the least.

How dare you speak as though taming it will be so easy? If it is that easy, do you think that I would be trampled beneath its foot at this very moment?

"Forget it, I shouldn't depend on this fellow. I should think of a way myself instead!"

Knowing that it wasn't a viable option to depend on this young man, Hall Master Han exerted his strength and attempted to push away the other party's foot. However, as soon as he exerted more strength, he felt the force weighing down him increasing proportionately as well.

Boom!

A huge shock wave rippled into the surroundings, and Hall Master Han was pushed deeper into the ground. A cloud of dust rose into the air, cloaking his face with dirt.

Pu!

Fresh blood spewed from his mouth once more. Under the immense force, his injuries worsened, and his consciousness was slowly getting hazy.

"To think that I would end up dying here..."

Desolation gripped his heart. Having engaged in beast taming his entire life, he thought that with his innumerable means, he would surely be able to turn this big fellow into his tamed beast. Never in his dreams did he expect that he would end up dying under the foot of the other party...

Just the thought of it left him frustrated.

Just as he was about to close his eyes and await his impending demise, he suddenly heard a sound that resembled both the call of a cow and the rumbling of thunder. Then, the immense force crushing down on him suddenly vanished.

Touching his body, he affirmed that he was still alive and that the Demon Cinque Beast, who was intent on crushing him into a lump of meat, had removed its foot.

Baffled, he opened his eyes to take a look, and with a single glance, his entire body convulsed and he nearly fainted.

"Th-this..."

His lips twitched intensely, and his eyes were about to pop out of their sockets. Hall Master Han seemed to have seen an inconceivable sight that was pushing the boundaries of his rationality.

The arrogant Demon Cinque Beast which was charging at him furiously to slaughter him so as to vent its resentment was currently lying obediently in front of a figure. Its head was closely aligned with the ground, and its thick tongue licked the other party's foot relentlessly. With a respectful expression, it fawned on the figure as though a loyal dog serving its owner. It was an indescribably crude sight.

What was going on?

Wasn't that fellow arrogant to the extreme, refusing to serve anyone even if it had spelled its death? Shouldn't nothing have been able to move it at all?

Why, in the blink of an eye, did it suddenly start licking the shoes of another person?

Besides, what is with your look of reverence? You are salivating, you know? You look as though you hate the fact that you don't

have two tongues to lick both shoes of the other party at once...
Can you at least retain some basic decency?

Rubbing his eyes forcefully, Hall Master Han tried to confirm whether he was seeing things when the figure in front of the Demon Cinque Beast pushed the face of the latter away impatiently.

"Go and chew on the grass by the side instead!"

Pu!

Hall Master Han's body swayed from side to side.

The Demon Cinque Beast is treating you so respectfully, and yet, you still pushed it away? Not to mention, asking it to feed on grass? It's a carnivore! How can it possibly eat grass?

But another shock awaited him. Without any hesitation, the Demon Cinque Beast immediately rushed to the side excitedly, opened its mouth widely, and began chewing on the grass joyfully, as though afraid that someone might steal it from him...

Pah!

Thinking that he might be dreaming, Hall Master Han sent a forceful slap to his face. The intense pain helped him to sharpen his consciousness, and looking over once more, the Demon Cinque Beast was still waging a war with the grass by the side.

"The hell! What on earth is going on?"

Clawing on his head frenziedly, Hall Master Han felt as though something had gone wrong with the world.

He had caught a clear glimpse of the figure whom the Demon Cinque Beast was fawning on. It was the 2-star beast tamer who had advised him previously, Zhang Xuan.

After three years of effort, the Demon Cinque Beast remained nonchalant to him, and even went to the extent of trying to kill him... Yet, this fellow only roared once, and the other party immediately licked his shoes and chewed on the grass by the side...

Where has the fairness of the world gone to?

Is the 4-star beast tamer me or you?

Suddenly, an idea emerged in his head.

"Could this be the reason why... Hall Master Sai is acting so politely around him?"

He had been perplexed over why Hall Master Sai would choose to treat this young man with utmost respect, and from the looks of it now, it seemed like this young man wasn't just a simple 2-star beast tamer.

Otherwise, how could he possibly make the Demon Cinque Beast lower its pride to such an extent and submit immediately with just a single howl?

Adjusting his breathing, Hall Master Han bore with the pain and walked up to the young man, "Thank you Beast Tamer Zhang for saving my life!"

If not for the other party taming the Demon Cinque Beast, he would have surely died. No matter what, the other party had saved his life, and this made him indebted to him.

Waving his hands casually, Zhang Xuan said, "I am only doing this because of Hall Master Sai's plea. If you must thank someone, thank Hall Master Sai!"

If not for Hall Master Sai, I wouldn't have even bothered!

"Still, it's only right for me to thank Beast Tamer Zhang. If not for your help, I would have surely been dead by now!"

After thanking Zhang Xuan once more, Hall Master Han turned to Hall Master Sai and clasped his fist, "Hall Master Sai, thank you..."

We've been buddies for so long, there's no need for you to stand on ceremonies!" Hall Master Sai's face reddened. "Besides, I'm of no help at all. Zhang shi managed to tame the Demon Cinque Beast all

by himself!"

"Zhang shi?"

Even though he had heard this address before, he thought that he might have just heard wrongly. After all, he was in the midst of battle, and there was a considerable distance between them and him. However, it was impossible for him to be mistaken this time around. His heart immediately jolted.

Could the young man before him be a master teacher?

"Un. Not only is Zhang shi a master teacher, he's also a 2-star beast tamer, 5-star appraiser, quasi 4-star formation master!" Hall Master Sai explained.

"Master teacher, 5-star... appraiser, and quasi 4-star... formation master?" Hall Master Han's face paled.

He thought that the other party was just a 2-star beast tamer, that was why he took the other party lightly. How could he have known that the other party would have so many occupations?

Putting everything aside, just his identity as a master teacher already made him of superior standing to him.

Master teachers were not to be made light or sullied. Those who dared to do so would be beaten to death on the spot, and no one would dare to speak up for that person.

Not to mention, the other party was a 5-star appraiser and quasi 4-star formation master on top of that.

"Of course, our young master isn't just limited to these occupations. He's also a physician, apothecary, and painter!" Seeing that the other party was stumped, a plump man walked out from the back of the young man and harrumphed.

"Seven... occupations?" Hall Master Han swallowed a mouthful of saliva and his mouth started trembling.

A person would have to spend much effort just to master one occupation. And yet, the person in front of him had already mastered seven...

When did such a monster appear in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance?

It was no wonder why Hall Master Sai paid such high regards to him. If he knew that the other party had such identities, he would have never dared to try pulling his weight before him.

"Indeed. But putting that aside for now, our young master has saved your life. Did you think that a single 'thanks' would suffice?"

The plump narrowed his eyes and stared at Hall Master Han in disdain, "I recall seeing you offer quite a few good things to the Demon Cinque Beast when you were trying to tame it. Why? Do

you think that your life isn't even worth that of a single spirit beast?"

"I..."

Hall Master Han's body froze.

Indeed. It was a breach of propriety to brush off his savior with just a word of thanks.

"Initially, I intended to use this spirit stone to attract the Demon Cinque Beast and tame it..."

Taking out the middle-tier spirit stone from before, Hall Master Han glanced at the Demon Cinque Beast, who was still busy chewing on grass. Knowing that it would be impossible for him to tame it at this point, he gritted his teeth and passed it over, "However... it seems like there's no use for it now. I'll give it to Zhang shi as a token of appreciation for saving my life then!"

The plump man took the spirit stone, fiddled around with it, and frowned, "Just one?"

"I... only have this single one!" Hall Master Han's face reddened.

There weren't too many middle-tier spirit stones throughout the entire Myriad Kingdom Alliance. It took him a lot of effort and luck just to procure this one.

"Alright then, so be it!" Seeing that this was the limit of the financial ability of the other party, Sun Qiang shook his head and presented the spirit stone to Zhang Xuan. "Young master!"

"Un!"

Catching it, Zhang Xuan nodded his head in satisfaction.

Honestly speaking, Sun Qiang was truly a capable subordinate. He was able to accurately deduce that Zhang Xuan was interested in the middle-tier spirit stone, and knowing that the latter probably made a move for it, he stepped forward and closed the deal.

In the end, master teachers weren't saints. It wasn't unusual for one to demand reward after doing another a favor, and master teachers were no exception as well.

Otherwise, given how many people were in need in this world, wouldn't he die of exhaustion?

Putting away the spirit stone in his storage ring, Zhang Xuan turned to Hall Master Han and said, "I just happen to require middle-tier spirit stones so I'll humbly accept your gift. But in any case, I won't take advantage of you. In exchange, I'll treat your injuries to compensate you!"

"Treat my injuries?" Hall Master Han was stunned. "You're

saying it's possible to treat such severe injuries?"

Under the relentless heavy blows of the Demon Cinque Beast and overexertion of his body, his internal organs had been shifted and his cultivation had fallen greatly. It would be difficult to treat such injuries at his age.

Thus, when Zhang Xuan said that he could treat him, the first thing he thought was that it was impossible.

"Since I've said it, naturally, I'll be able to do it. However, if you don't wish to, we can drop the matter!" Zhang Xuan waved his hands.

"Of course I want to be treated..." Recalling the other party's identity as a physician and master teacher, Hall Master Han hurriedly nodded his head.

If it was in the past, he would have never believed such words. However, looking at the Demon Cinque Beast obediently chewing on a patch of grass, he couldn't help but think that the young man before him just might be capable of doing so.

After agreeing to the matter, Hall Master Han asked, "Zhang shi, do you need any medicinal herbs? I have some of them here..."

Even though he wasn't a physician, as a cultivator and a beast tamer, he still retained some basic knowledge on medicine. Given the extent of his injuries, without the complementation of

centuries-old medicinal herbs, it would be very difficult for him to make a full recovery.

And he happened to have some of these medicinal herbs.

Just as he was about to take these things out, the young man before him spoke up.

"Medicinal herbs? There's no need for any... Demon Cinque Beast, come over and knock this fellow out for me!"

Chapter 500: Knockout Treatment Method

Knock out?

Not only did Hall Master Han widen his eyes, the others were baffled by Zhang Xuan's actions as well, and they stared at one another in confusion.

Aren't you going treat Hall Master Han's injuries?

What do you mean by knocking him out?

"There's no need to worry. This is our old master's exclusive technique, Knockout Treatment Method!" Sun Qiang explained.

Having followed behind Yang shi for a period of time, he knew that this was the old master's exclusive technique. As the direct disciple of the old master, it was natural that the young master would know of it as well.

The crowd became even more perplexed.

To treat someone by knocking them out... Such a method existed in the world?

Hu!

Before the crowd could react, the Demon Cinque Beast suddenly

turned around, walked, over, and stared at Hall Master Han, causing the other party's hair to stand on end.

"Zhang shi... Why don't we pass on the 'knockout'? Perhaps... medicine might be better..."

Recalling how the gigantic fellow charged at him relentlessly to kill him previously, Hall Master Han started trembling uncontrollably.

Would this big fellow use this opportunity to get back at him? Zhang shi told it to knock him out, but what if it used this chance to kill him instead? It was better to be safe than sorry...

"There's no need to go through so much trouble. Demon Cinque Beast, what are you hesitating for? Hurry up!"

Zhang Xuan frowned.

Roar!

Hearing the instruction, the Demon Cinque Beast howled in delight. Stepping forward, its thick wings immediately flew over and struck him.

"I..."

Hall Master Han really cried this time around.

If only I'd known that this was your treatment method, I would surely have just given the middle-tier spirit stone to you for free. I don't need such compensation...

Peng!

In his current condition, it was impossible for Hall Master Han to escape. Thus, when the wing struck the back of his head, his vision turned black and he passed out.

"This..."

The corner of Zhao Feiwu's mouth twitched violently. Her body trembled slightly, and at this moment, she felt extremely glad that she was countless kilometers away from this fellow back when she was treated. It was fortunate that he only presented the solution via the Wall of Dilemma. If he had been the one to administer the treatment personally...

Would this have been her fate as well?

Was there really such a treatment method in the world?

Being feeble since young, she had seen innumerable top-notch physicians. However, she had never heard of a case where one had to be knocked out in order to be treated.

Perplexed, she turned her gaze over, only to see Zhang Xuan walking over to the unconscious Hall Master Han and placing his forefinger and middle finger on the other party's wrist.

A moment later, he stood up, flicked his wrist, and a few silver needles appeared in his hand.

Sou sou sou sou!

The silver needles shot through thin air and landed straight on the numerous acupoints throughout Hall Master Han's body. Then, with a grabbing action, all of the silver needles returned back to his hand.

"Done!"

Clapping his hand, Zhang Xuan turned to Hall Master Sai and said, "Wake him up!"

"Done?"

Everyone was dumbfounded.

Were you really treating him or were you just fooling around? After placing a few needles, you say that you're done?

Zhao Feiwu and Jin Conghai stared at one another.

They had clearly seen the location of where the needles landed. Rather than acupoints, those were mingmen! There wouldn't be any other physicians who would dare to touch these vulnerable spots. Even if this was a secret art of some kind, it should be impossible to induce a full recovery just by being pierced on several locations for a brief moment, right?

Or was the treatment method simply too profound for them?

Hall Master Sai had only seen the other party identifying treasures and earning their acknowledgement but he had never seen the other party treating someone before. As such, he was totally baffled by the sight before him. Even so, since the other party had already spoken, he nodded his head and stepped forward. Pressing on the other party's philtrum, he infused a surge of zhenqi in.

"Cough cough!"

Coughing violently, Hall Master Han opened his eyes.

Hu!

Pressing against the ground, he hurriedly retreated backward. "Zhang shi, can I pass on the treatment..."

But before he could finish his words, he suddenly paused and his eyes widened.

As a cultivator, he was well aware of the various changes in his body. Given how he was able to push himself backward just by exerting some force on his palm, and the unobstructed flow of Origin Energy in his body, there could only be a single possibility... He had fully recovered from his injuries!

How was that possible?

Doubtful, he stretched out his hand and grabbed forward. A massive handprint immediately gathered in the space in front of him.

The handprint distorted the air in the surroundings with its immense might, reminiscent of a floating block of water, threatening to tear through space at any moment.

"Great Ocean Seizing Hands? Hall master, y-you... have recovered?"

Seeing his actions, not only was Hall Master Sai and the other perplexed, the other elders who had collaborated with him on the formation also widened their eyes in shock, and their breathing hastened.

Great Ocean Seizing Hands was Spirit intermediate-tier battle technique. It was incomparably powerful, and without sufficient Origin Energy and strength, it was impossible to execute it.

As the core of the formation, he was the one leading the fight

against the Demon Cinque Beast previously. Thus, it was natural that he would bear the brunt of the attack and suffer the greatest damage. At the moment, every single one of them found it hard to even climb to their feet, and they felt as though they would breathe their last at any moment. Yet, the other party executed a battle technique which one could only utilize at their peak condition...

Did it have to be so exaggerated?

"I've recovered?" Hall Master Han widened his eyes in disbelief. Suddenly recalling something, he flicked his wrist and a spear appeared in his palm. Then, he shook it slightly.

Weng!

A surge of Weapon Intent was suddenly flicked out, and it stabbed into a gigantic boulder not too far away.

Boom!

The boulder exploded into innumerable smithereens.

"Clear Passageway, Flawless Intent! Hall master... you've recovered... from the trauma you sustained before as well?" Elder Hu's lips shuddered.

In truth, the reason why they, the elders of the Beast Hall, were willing to assist their hall master in capturing the Demon Cinque

Beast even despite the threat of danger was not due to his order but in awe of the hall master's character.

Back then, in order to help them tame their spirit beasts, he had once entered the depths of a marsh and was bitten by a poisonous worm. Ever since then, there had been a blockage in his meridian, resulting in a trauma. As such, his Weapon Intent was unable to flow through his body, thereby ending his weapon cultivation there.

If not for that, given the hall master's talent and strength, even if he couldn't tame the Demon Cinque Beast, he would still be able to triumph over Luo Ming in the selections. There would be no need for him to go through so much trouble.

The hall master had never demanded compensation from them for his sacrifice, and similarly, they were also willing to give their all for the hall master. No matter how tiring it was, they cultivated the collaborative offensive formation along with him without a word of complaint.

They thought that the hall master would be limited by his lack of Weapon Intent for his entire life. Never in their dreams did they expect that just by being knocked out and pierced with a few needles, the other party would not only be able to execute the Great Ocean Seizing Hands, he would even be able to utilize Weapon Intent... What in the world happened?

"My trauma... is gone?"

Since Elder Hu could tell this much, how could Hall Master Han, the person in question, remain ignorant of it? He hurriedly turned his sights to the young man before him.

"Oh. I realized that you have sustained some traumas so I helped you treat those as well since it's convenient. You don't need to compensate me for that!" Zhang Xuan waved his hands casually.

In truth, when Hall Master Han fought with the Demon Cinque Beast previously, a book on him had already been compiled in the Library of Heaven's Path. The reason why Zhang Xuan went through all the trouble to knock the other party out and touch his pulse was to conceal the secret regarding his Heaven's Path zhenqi.

The book compiled also reflected the other party's traumas as well. Since he was going to treat the other party, he couldn't possibly just go halfway.

Besides, it wasn't difficult to do so either. Heaven's Path zhenqi could be turned into both medicine and poison with just a single thought of his. He had treated many people whose meridians had been blocked by lethal poison in the past too.

"Convenient..." Hall Master Han's eyes reddened and he nearly went insane.

He had looked up all of the physicians throughout Myriad Kingdom City but none of them had a solution to his problem. Because the poisonous worm had bitten him while he was executing Weapon Intent, even though he was cured of the poison

eventually, some remnants of the poison resulted in his meridians being permanently blocked...

He didn't even mention his hidden problem but Zhang shi had already treated it out of convenience...

Did you have to be that extreme?

Suddenly, a thought flashed through Hall Master Han's mind and he asked, "Elder Hu, how long... have I been out for?"

Given how all of his injuries were treated and even his traumas were gone, the treatment process must have taken a significant length of time.

Two hours? Four hours?

Or perhaps... a day?

"How long? From the moment you were knocked out until now... I think around a minute has passed!" Elder Hu calculated.

"A minute?" Hall Master Han's body swayed weakly.

He had already been awake for half a minute, so that meant... the treatment process took only a maximum of... half a minute?

How in the world did he do it?

"Since he was able to treat my injuries, he should be able to treat the other elders as well..."

Suppressing his agitation and shock, Hall Master Han suddenly thought of something and his eyes lit up. He hurriedly stepped forward and asked, "Zhang shi, Elder Hu and the others have gotten injured for my sake. If you can treat them as well, I'll be eternally thankful to you..."

It was due to him that the elders had all landed in such a state. He couldn't possibly just leave them in the dumps now that he had recovered.

"Our young master is a formidable physician so his services aren't cheap..." Sun Qiang stepped forward.

"I understand..." Hall Master Han hurriedly nodded his head. Flicking his wrist, the several thousand spirit stones that he had used to entice the Demon Cinque Beast previously appeared in the ground before him. Under the sun, it looked like a mountain of crystal, and spiritual energy surged forth from the mini mountain.

Even though spirit stones were valuable as well, they meant nothing when compared to the lives of his old buddies.

"Alright!" Putting away the spirit stones into his storage ring, Zhang Xuan first turned to Elder Hu and said, "I believe you all

should know my treatment method!"

"I've heard everything!" Elder Hu quickly nodded his head. "I know what I should do..."

After which, he turned to the Demon Cinque Beast and said. "Come and hit me with all of your might! I can take it..."

"..." The crowd.

Zhang Xuan staggered.

The heck! It would suffice as long as you lose consciousness. Do you need to flirt with a spirit beast like that?

Suppressing his urge to spurt blood, Zhang Xuan said, "Cough cough. Actually, there's no need for it to make a move, you can use any means to make yourself faint. I'll be able to conduct my treatment as long as you're unconscious!"

"It'll suffice as long as I lose consciousness?" Elder Hu was taken aback. On the other hand, Hall Master Han's vision turned dark.

If it was that simple, why did you have to get the Demon Cinque Beast to make a move on me? Do you know how close to death I came because of it...

"Alright!" After confirming the treatment method, Elder Hu

stretched out his palm and struck his forehead without any hesitation.

Padah!

His vision immediately turned dark and he fainted.

Zhang Xuan stepped forward. A moment later, Elder Hu woke up. Leaping to his feet, his eyes glowed brightly.

A moment later, Elder Hu woke up. Leaping to his feet, his eyes glowed in agitation.

"It's your turn!"

After treating Elder Hu, Zhang Xuan walked up to another elder.

Knowing what Zhang Xuan needed, without wasting any time, he immediately struck his own forehead.

...

And thus, Zhao Feiwu and the others saw an incredibly bizarre sight unfolding before them. Renowned Transcendent Mortal beast tamers of the Myriad Kingdom City knocked themselves out as soon as Zhang Xuan approached them...

And after having some needles pierced into several acupoints, they regained their vitality and leaped around excitedly...

"So fast?"

Only at this moment did Hall Master Han finally get a chance to see the other party's treatment method and speed, and his throat turned dry.

Even though Elder Hu's words had already given him some idea of it, witnessing it with his own eyes still left him in shock.

Making a rough calculation, from the moment that the elders were knocked out to the point that the silver needles were extracted, not even twenty breaths had passed...

In less than twenty breaths, in the young man's miraculous hands, the severe injuries of the patients disappeared. On top of that, the patients were even able to leap around freely as soon as they woke up, as though the injuries they had sustained before were imaginary...

He didn't know much about physicians so he couldn't make a clear judgement on the other party's capability. However, one thing he could make judgement on was the other party's beast taming capability. To make the Demon Cinque Beast submit with just a single bellow, and making it feed on grass willingly from an instruction, the other party's beast taming ability had at least reached... 5-star!

A 5-star beast tamer and a potential 5-star physician... Really, where in the world did this monster come from?